

HISTORY OF THE VAISYAS OF BENGAL.

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"What we wish is, that where there has been dependency there shall be hope ; where there has been mistrust there shall be confidence ; where there has been alienation and hate there shall be woven the ties of a strong attachment between man and man."

THE RIGHT HON'BLE W. E. GLADSTONE.

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TO THE SACRED MEMORY OF
MY FATHER,
THE LATE
BABOO JADU-LALL MULICK,
This Book
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

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AS the history of a people is not merely the history of ruling dynasties and successful and unsuccessful wars, but the progress—social, moral and intellectual --of the people themselves as well, the history of the rise and progress of the different sections composing it is an important element. The history of the people of Bengal, if one has to trace it from remote times, must consist chiefly of the history of its different sections, as we know very little of the kings and their wars and conquests. There are no annals of the Hindu kings, and we are left to mythological stories, which cannot be boiled down to history. Modern researches and the study of copper plates and inscriptions on monuments and monoliths are not sufficient for the purposes of a regular or reliable history of the Hindu kings. The Mahomedan records contain very scanty references to the people of the country.

Notwithstanding what was said as to the extinction in the *Kali Yuga* of the Kshetrias and Vaisyas, the Hindu population of Bengal like the people of other parts of India consist of the four great castes, the Brahmans, Kshetrias, Vaisyas and Sudras. Any one of these great castes might have for reasons not far to seek, abandoned the use of the

sacerdotal thread, but its distinctive characteristics in habits, manners, customs, usages and physiognomy have never been lost. The Vaisyas of Bengal constitute an integral part of the people and their history traced from the time of their immigration into Bengal from the North-Western Provinces, the successive phases of their civilization as time went on and their connection with the rulers cannot but be interesting from an historical point of view.

They trace their settlement in Bengal to an ancient date when the Pal Rajas were reigning and Buddhism was the religion of the great mass of the people. They brought wealth and commerce with them and they were the main cause of reputed wealth of the kingdom of Bengal. During the sovereignty of the Sen dynasty the encouragement which they had received from the kings continued for a time but princes can seldom be trusted and the leader of the then Vaisya community fell under the displeasure of Ballal Sen. The king deprived the community of the dignities they had enjoyed in court and compelled the other sections of the people to treat them as if they were degraded. Other sections of the community were encouraged to take their place but as time went on it plainly showed that the Vaisyas could not be superseded in their own department. Arts, manufacture and

commerce remained under their control to a considerable extent. During the period of the Mahomedan rule in Bengal, there was not much known of them but there can be no doubt that they commanded the higher arts and commerce of the land. In the succeeding period they came to the front again, co-operating with the kindred spirit of the European nations.

The following pages deal with the history of this great section of the people of Bengal, specially that sub-section which is known as *Subarna Banik*. The appendix contains the history of individuals of known reputation during the period of British rule. Many more names may be added but that would make the treatise too long. To the student of the real history of Bengal, that is, the history of its people, this little work may prove of interest.

It is for this reason Mr. Wheeler says :—"Notwithstanding however the attempt of the Raja Ballal to lower the Banyas in national esteem, their opulence and enterprise have always maintained the respectability and dignity of the class and a mercantile aristocracy has arisen among them which has held the purse strings of the nation and of whom the rich family of the Mullicks* of the present day are a favourable example. Many of the Banyas may be traced as having gradually migrated in

*See appendix A

by-gone generations from Gaur through Murshidabad, Birbhum and Burdwan, and finally settled at Satgong* in the District of Hughly. It is this latter class of adventurous Banyas who chiefly carried on mercantile transactions in the sixteenth century with the Portuguese of Hughly, and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the Dutch of Chinsura, the French of Chandernagore, and the English of Calcutta. From this circumstance it is said that the Banyas first imbibed a tincture of European refinement and delicacy towards females which until late years was little appreciated by the rest of their country men."

" Truth and reason never cause revolutions on the earth; they are the fruit of experience, which can only be exercised when the passions are at rest; they excite not in the heart those furious emotions which shake empires to their base. Truth can only be discovered by peaceful minds: it is only adopted by kindred spirits. If it change the opinions of men, it is only by insensible gradations--a gentle and easy descent conducting them to reason. The revolutions caused by the progress of truth are always beneficial to society, and are only burthensome to those who deceive and oppress it."—*Du Marsais.*

* Satgong is the popular name of Saptagram and a section of the Banya community is still called Saptagramia Subarna Banik.

HISTORY

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VAISYAS OF BENGAL.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT can be of more interest and delight than to dive into the depths of time and bring out the hoary fragments of the glorious past. Physical and historical causes contribute in a great measure to the formation of the character of a nation, and a brief review of such causes cannot fail to elicit interesting points regarding the character and nature of the people of Bengal and its civilisation.

The fertile soil and the damp heat of the country make the people think little of labour and activity. Buckle in his *History of Civilisation* divides mankind into two classes. One class has power over nature, and the other class is under the power of nature, and to the latter class belong the people of Bengal. The terrible and sudden convulsions of nature, the furious hurricanes and sudden flood, the fearful famine and crushing earthquakes, only im-

press upon man his weakness and utter helplessness and make him timorous and superstitious in the extreme. Such was the case with the people of Bengal. Something worse than these was the lawlessness and tyranny of the rulers and their inefficiency to protect the people from the hands of thieves and robbers. The insecure times were paralysing to the active energies of the people.

* "Industry and frugality cannot exist where there is not a preponderant probability that those who labour and spare will be permitted to enjoy. And the nearer this probability approaches to certainty, the more do industry and frugality become the pervading qualities in a people." As a natural consequence, foresight and provision for the future amongst the people were neglected. But the varied features of the country where nature displays herself in all her grandeur, beauty and sublimity, her fruitful soil and mighty rivers, her extensive forests and tropical climate—all combined make them a race of philosophers and poets. Under these circumstances, therefore, it is not strange that their mind should have a proclivity towards religion. The people thought little of keeping a history of their times, in a systematic manner, yet interesting facts and informations could be gleaned from the Hindu Sastras, the fountain-heads of all informa-

* Mill's Principle of Political Economy.

tion regarding matters, religious and secular. Such interesting informations would hardly find a place in the Hindu Sastras were it not for the fact that bountiful nature afforded every facility for the advancement of early civilisation. The fertile soil of the country, which required only a trifling amount of labour for ample production, and the net work of navigable rivers supplied the people with all the necessaries of life, and thus they were at their ease to form themselves into societies—the first requisite for civilisation. What with the rapid increase of population, which tends to intensify the struggle for life, and consequent extension of profession, the people were obliged to divide themselves into classes. Bengal in its primeval days abounded with mighty forests and malarious waterbeds. It was infested with tigers of the strongest and fiercest nature, serpents of the deadliest poison and men no less barbarous than their cohabitants. In the sacred Hindu Sastras we find that the descendants of the Lunar race, Anga, Banga, Kalinga, Poundra and Sukshya were the first immigrants. It is they who conquered these parts of India and named them after their own names. Manu has also recognised these portions of India, consisting of Anga, Banga, etc., as parts of *Aryabarta*. In the *Mahabharat* too these names occur. Although it is impossible to fix the period with any degree of preci-

sion when these descendants of the Lunar race arrived in Bengal, yet we can show that the emigration took place prior to the invasion of Alexander for * "the combat with Porus," says Plutarch, "abated the spirit of the Macedonians and made them resolve to proceed no further in India. It is with difficulty they had defeated an enemy who brought only twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse into the field and therefore they opposed Alexander with great firmness, when he insisted that they should pass the Ganges which, they were informed, was thirty-two furlongs in breadth and in depth a hundred fathoms. The opposite shore, too, was covered with numbers of squadrons, battalions and elephants. For the kings of the Gandarites and Proesians were said to be waiting for them there, with eighty thousand horse, two hundred thousand foot, eight thousand chariots and six thousand elephants trained to war." Mahavansa, a Buddhist work of considerable merit written in *Pali*, treating as it does of facts and legends in the history of Ceylon, suggests points of great interest in the early history of Bengal. It is the only authentic source for the history of India previous to Christian era and the discovery of which made the name of George Turnour illustrious. In it we find that in or about 543 B. C. a prince of Bengal by

* Langhorne's Plutarch's Lives: Alexander.

name Begya Sur with followers of 700⁰ men landed at Ceylon and conquered the aborigines and founded a dynasty of kings who reigned upto so late a year as 1798 A. D.

It has now been proved beyond all shades of doubt that Bengal had secured for its people so early a civilisation as in the beginning of the sixteenth century before Christ. But it remains to be seen whether that civilisation was due to historical or physical causes. It is said that a colony of Aryans under their leaders conquered and settled in Bengal. By lapse of time, it is possible, society was formed into a civil society ruled by a king. So it cannot be gainsaid that these colonists played a not unimportant part in the civilisation of Bengal. But we are apt to believe that they could not have been successful in their attempts if nature had not favoured the land in all the ways mentioned above. Nay, they would not in fact have cared to settle in the land even if they happened to come there. For who would care to reign in the burning deserts of Sahara or to live in the snowy ranges of the Himalayas? It was therefore the very many natural advantages of Bengal which induced the Aryans to settle there. It had even its diamond mines as described in Taverner's Travels. He writes: "I come to the third mine which is the most ancient of all and is situated in

the kingdom of Bengal. You may call it by the name of Sommelpore, which is a large town near to which the diamonds are found or rather by the name of Koel which is that of river in the sand of which they are found." It is possible that Pliny's mention of the Ganges as yielding precious stones may be connected with this fact. For the Koel comes from the high mountains to the south and loses its name in the Ganges. We see, therefore, that the physical condition of Bengal was alone responsible for the settlement of the civilised Aryans. Civilisation on the other hand is diffusive when it gets a medium, and trade may appropriately be called its true medium. And as trade grew Bengal became more and more civilised. A moment's reflection will leave no room for doubting the fact that it is trade, it is the love of wealth, nay, the love of comforts, that makes man dissatisfied with his present lot and condition of life and induces him to search after novelty even at the expense of his very existence. Is there any doubt as to this? Who knows not that it is trade alone which creates in a man a desire so indomitable as to cross the mighty main, the towering mountains and the trackless forests. It is trade which enriched India, and the world looked at it in wild amazement. It is trade which brings in civilisation into a country. Is there any doubt that the small band of traders,

the East India Company, formed the nucleus of the vast British Empire in India? Proofs of this can be adduced by heaps and heaps. Is it then strange to suppose that such was the case with the emigration of Bengal? We should certainly say, no. We know not to whom Bengal owed its civilisation, but this much is certain, and we can safely assert, that trade is the true medium of civilisation, and traders played a prominent part in persuading the people to relish the fruits of civilisation. The names of some such traders are still to be found in the ceremonial lore of Bengal. We shall now try to ascertain who those traders were and what the people of India are now. Both native and foreign writers testify that the ancient Hindus were a commercial and seafaring people. The Rig Veda, Manu and the writings of the Buddhistic period abundantly prove that the Hindus navigated the ocean for commercial purpose, and this has also been borne out by such authentic writers as Arrian, Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy. The illustrious names of Srimanta, Chand and Dhanapati, the traders, who carried on a sea trade with the Indian Archipelago and even Egypt, are still celebrated in song throughout the country. It is most unfortunate that we cannot in the course of our discussion mention the names of other traders, because no written history has enlightened us on the point, and the materials on

which we can form our basis are but few and scarce. In the Mahabharat, however, we find that the kings of Bengal went as allies of Durjodhone, displayed no mean strategy on the field and were killed in the famous battle of Kurukshetra. Hence it is clear that for a long time the people of Bengal took an active part in whatever affected the welfare of their Aryan brothers of the Punjab and had a very close connection with them. So our purpose will be fully served if we look into the history of the traders of India. In it we shall find how they were enabled to grow into a position of consequence during the past centuries.

The authentic early history of the people of India is to be found in the sacred books of the Hindus and in the accounts of the chroniclers of the conquerors who invaded India. But these sacred books are unfortunately so full of contradictory statements that it is extremely difficult to draw a line between stern truths and fanciful statements, and what is more regrettable is the fact that the language in which the books are written has now become almost a dead language, and the few who are masters of it are generally either afraid of giving reasonable interpretations of the Sastras on any point, lest they should run the risk of losing their fair names by being declared as heretics, or they would not care to pass any opinion at all so long as their purse is full. So to find

out the truths out of the chaotic field of Hindu Ethnology what can be of more importance than to look into the different accounts fortunately left by Greek writers and Chinese and other travellers who visited India and to compare them with the dissertation of the Hindu Sastras and the disquisitions and opinions of eminent scholars who from time to time laboured in this direction.

The fabulous wealth of India and a spirit of conquest roused the ambition of the Macedonian conqueror to invade India, and he did so in the year 327 B. C. Although his expedition was not altogether a success, yet it produced valuable memorials regarding India. Alexander the Great, it is well known, carried scientific men with him to chronicle his achievements and describe the countries to which he might carry his arms; some of his officers, too, were men of literary culture, who could wield the pen as well as the sword. Their invaluable works are unfortunately lost but their substance is to be found condensed in Strabo, Pliny and Arrian. In the *Indika of Arrian* we come across the existence of seven castes in India. It has also been borne out by the accounts of Megasthenes about India. No particular name is assigned to any of these seven classes into which it is supposed that the population of India was then divided. As to this, *Elphinstone* remarks :—

“ The Greek writers by confounding some distinctions occasioned by civil employment with those arising from that division, have increased the number of classes from five (including the handicraftsmen or mixed classes) to seven. This number is produced by their supposing the kings’ councillors and assessors to form a distinct class from the Brahmans ; by splitting the class of Vaisya into two, consisting of shepherds and husbandmen ; by introducing a caste of spies ; and by omitting the servile class altogether. With these exceptions the classes are in the state described by Manu which is the ground work of that still subsisting.” Hunter* gives his opinion of the seven castes instead of four in the following manner :—“ The philosophers were the Brahmans and the prescribed stages of their life are indicated. Megasthenes draws a distinction between the Brahmans and the *Sarmani* from which some scholars infer that the Buddhist Sramans or monks were a recognised order, 300 B. C., or fifty years before the council of Asoka. But the *Sarmani* might also include Brahmans in the first and third stages of their life as students and forest recluses. The inspectors or sixth class of Megasthenes have been identified with the Buddhist supervisors of morals, afterwards referred to in the sixth edict of Asoka.” It seems

* Indian Empire.

probable that there was no disturbance in the four-fold division of caste system in the Hindu society. It is impossible to think that the four-fold division of caste system was not in vogue then, but it is quite possible that these writers failed to secure a very correct account or information in the matter, but simply gave out what they had seen. It is recited in *Manu* that there lived a king named *Bena* in the Golden Age, who, in order to increase the population, commanded the people on pain of death to have promiscuous intermarriage between the four castes, which was prohibited in the Hindu *Sastras*. But it is very strange that such great number of castes, as recited in *Manu*, did find no place in any of the above accounts. If such a number of castes had really existed in the Golden Age as has already been said, there would necessarily have been more divisions of castes than seven. From this we can very well conclude that either the accounts given by *Arrian* and *Megasthenes* are imperfect, or the facts referred to in *Manu* are of later date. There are great divergencies of opinion as to the date of the code of *Manu*. It has been the subject of much speculation from the appearance of *Sir William Jones*' translation downwards. Suffice it to say they all differ. The Hindu *Sastras* claim for the law a divine origin and

ascribe them to the first Manu of Aryan man, thirty millions of years ago. Sir William Jones accepted for it an antiquity of 1,250 to 500 B. C. Schegel was confident that it could not be later than 1,000 B. C. Professor Monier Williams puts it at 500 B. C. and Johaeutgen assigns 350 B. C. as the lowest possible date. Dr. Burnell concludes—"It thus appears that the text belongs to an outgrowth of Brahminical literature which was intended for the benefit of the kings when the Brahminical civilisation had begun to extend itself over the south of India." Dr. Burnell's investigations prove that the older code belonged to the Sutra period, probably extending from the sixth to the second century B. C., and the present code indicates 500 A. D. as the most probable date. Megasthenes, who as a Greek ambassador remained in the court of Chandra Gupta for a long time, had vast opportunities for the closest observation. His accounts about India are at one with those of Arrian. Hunter says—"It must be borne in mind that Indian society as seen by Megasthenes was not the artificial structure described in Manu with its rigid lines and four sharply demarcated castes. It was the actual society of the court, the camp and the capital at a time, when Buddhist ideals were conflicting with Brahminical types. Some of the so

called errors of Megasthenes have been imputed to him from a want of due appreciation of this fact. Others have been proved by modern enquiry to be no error at all."

Now it is conclusively proved that the existence of seven classes or castes in India were the sheer outcome of the mingling of Buddhism and Brahminism. What was the state of Hindu mind which developed Buddhism can better be described in the words of Max Muller :--* "All this was inevitable and Prometheus, the man of forethought, could safely predict the fall of Zeus. The struggles by which reason and faith overthrow tradition and superstition vary in different countries and at different times, but the final victory is always on their side. In India same antagonism manifested itself, but what there seemed a victory of reason threatened to become the destruction of all religious faith. At first there was hardly a struggle : on the primitive mythological stratum of thought two new formations arose—the Brahminical philosophy and the Brahminical ceremonial, the one opening all avenues of philosophical thought, the other fencing all religious feelings within the narrowest barriers. Both derived their authority from the same source. Both professed to carry out the meaning and purpose of the Vedas. Thus we see on the one

* Buddhism and Buddhist Pilgrim.

side the growth of a numerous and powerful priesthood and the establishment of a ceremonial, which embraced every moment of a man's life from his birth to his death. There was no event which might have moved the heart to a spontaneous outpourings of praise or thanksgiving which was not regulated by priestly formulas. Every prayer was prescribed, every sacrifice determined. Every god had his share and the claims of each deity on the adoration of the faithful were set down with such punctiliousness, the danger of offending their pride was represented in such vividness that no one would venture to approach their presence without the assistance of a well paid staff of masters and divine ceremonies. It was impossible to avoid sin without the help of the Brahmins. They alone knew the food that might properly be eaten, the air which might properly be breathed, the dress which might properly be worn. They alone could tell what god should be invoked, what sacrifice be offered, and the slightest mistake of pronunciation, the slightest neglect about clarified butter or the length of the ladle on which it would be offered, might bring destruction upon the head of the unassisted worshipper. No nation was ever so completely priest-ridden as the Hindus under the sway of the Brahminical law. Yet on the other side the same people, were allowed to indulge in the

most unrestrained freedom of thought and in the schools of their philosophy, the very names of their gods were never mentioned. Their existence was neither denied nor asserted, they were of no greater importance in the system of the world of thought than trees or mountains, men or animals, and to offer sacrifices to them with hope of rewards, so far from being meritorious, was considered as dangerous to that emancipation to which a clear perception of philosophical truth was to lead the patient student. There was one system which taught that there existed but one Being without a second, that everything else which seemed to exist was but a dream and illusion, and that this illusion might be removed by a true knowledge of the one Being. There was another system which admitted two principles—one a subjective and self-existent mind, the other—matter endowed with qualities. Here the world, with its joys and sorrows was explained as the result of subjective self, reflecting itself in the mirror of matter, and final emancipation was obtained by turning away the eyes from the play of Nature and being absorbed in the knowledge of the true and absolute self. A third system started with the admission of atoms and explained every effect including the elements and the mind, animals, man and gods from the concurrence of these atoms. The germs of all these

Indra Prastha Sanskrit Library

systems are traced back to the Vedas, Brahmans and Upanishads and the man who believed in any one of them was considered as orthodox as the devout worshipper of Agni—the one was saved by knowledge and faith, the other by works and faith. Such was the state of Hindu mind when Buddhism arose or rather such was the state of the Hindu mind which gave rise to Buddhism. Buddha himself went through the school of the Brahmins. He performed their penances, he studied their philosophy and he at last claimed the name of Buddha or the Enlightened, when he threw away the whole ceremonial with its sacrifices, superstitious penances and castes as worthless and changed the complicated system of philosophy into a short doctrine of salvation." Now all this clearly and distinctly shows that it is the work of time and the outcome of the spiritual advancement, and not the wanton ravages of an usurper that produced this state of things in India. The discoveries of science, the graces of art and the charms of genius may attract a few in every age, but it is religious emotion which moves the great body of mankind to tremendous works and it was by the divine preachings of the immortal teacher that the fetters of the caste system were thrown away. As the four rivers, which fell into Ganges, lose their name as soon as they mingle their waters with the holy river, so all who believe

in Buddha cease to be Brahmans, Kshattriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. This can only be the work of time and the outcome of the spiritual advancement. It is owing to this fact that the Greek writers did not mention the names of the four castes, and it was neither due to their want of knowledge nor of careful investigation. The caste system at the time, therefore, lost its hold on the minds of the people and free intercourse between all castes must necessarily have ensued. The influence of Brahminism was all but extinct, when the light and leading of Sankaracharya and Kumarila Bhatta fanned the dying spark of Brahmanism and kept it alive, which soon became predominant and it was then that Hindu society seemed to have been formed on stricter principles than before under the direct steering of the greatest men of the age.

The complete destruction of the caste system, wherever Buddhism went, soon had its reaction, for as soon as the wave of Buddhism drifted away from the holy land, it left a sediment of mischief which could not be done away with. Greater divisions of caste than four were, as a result, formed on a solid basis. It was not simply the outcome of the arbitrary orders of the king Bena but the religious emotion of Buddha. We have also stated in the early part of the discussion that although mention of him is found in Manu, we

do not find in the accounts of the Greek writers the existence of numerous castes for which his arbitrary orders were, it is said, alone responsible. It helps us therefore to come to the conclusion that he lived after the invasion of Alexander. It is stated in Manu that he was a very powerful king. He was arbitrary and an atheist. He did not believe in the tenets of the Hindu Sastras and commended the people on pain of death to have promiscuous intermarriage among the four castes which was strictly prohibited in the Hindu Sastras. Most probably he was a follower of Buddha. Major-General Cunningham writes in his *Ancient Geography* that Raja Bena Chakravarti played a very conspicuous part in all the regions of North Behar, Oudh and Rohilkhand. The original settlement of Soron, undoubtedly a place of very great antiquity, is attributable to him. The ancient remains at Hurdwar of the old fort of Raja Bena are still to be found. Now these ancient ruins, it is impossible to think, could have escaped the notice of the Greek writers, were they then in existence. The name of so great and powerful a king as Bena, coming down as it has to the present age, did not reach the ears of the Macedonian conqueror nor his followers.* And the

* *cf.*—“To the north-west of Vaisali at somewhat less than 33 miles Howen Thsang places the ruins of an ancient town which had been deserted for many ages. There Buddha was said to have reigned in a previous existence, as a Chakravarti Raja or Supreme Ruler, named Mahadev and a stupa still existed to commemorate the fact. The name of the place is not

ideas, with which Bena was imbued, as displayed in his administration, made it clear that he was strict follower of Buddha. The conclusion is therefore irresistible that he reigned sometime after the invasions of Alexander in the glorious days of Buddhism, and the castes more than four in number were formed, which are eating into vitals of Hindu society. Buddhism, which arose, tried to obliterate the four divisions of caste, but it, on the other hand, helped in a great measure to give rise to castes more than four. It is a curious irony of fate! and for which time alone is responsible.

Now let us see who were the Vaisyas and what they are. At first the Brahminical order alone existed without any other—no Kshattriya, no Vaisya and no Sudra. The Creator, it is said, was not satisfied with a state of things in which all were Brahmins. So he created other three orders. The Vaisyas came as the third class to raise food and create wealth for the sustenance and comfort of

given but the bearing and the distance point to Kasariya an old ruined town just 30 miles to the north-north-west of Vaisali. The place possesses a mound of ruins with a lofty stupa on the top, which the people attribute to Raja Bena Chakravarti. In the Purans also Raja Bena is called Chakravarti or supreme monarch: and I have found his name as widely spread through Northern India as that of Rama or the five Pandus. This monument stands at the point of crossing of the two great thoroughfares of the district, namely, that from Patna northward to Battia and that from Chapra across the Gandak to Nepal. It is a curious illustration of this fact that Buddha himself according to the Ceylonese chroniclers informed Ananda that for a Chakravarti Raja they build the stupa at a spot where four principal roads meet." I have little doubt therefore that this is the identical place indicated by the Chinese pilgrim.—*Major Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India.*

the commonwealth. Hunter says, it is the Vaisyas alone who retained the old name of Vaisya from the root "*vis*" which in the Vedic period had included the whole people.* In the Rig Veda, the most ancient work extant among the Indo-Aryans, it is found that the early Aryans led a nomadic life and moved from place to place in quest of pasture for their cattle. Manu says—Prajapati created the animals (probably cattle) and put them under the charge of the Vaisyas (Chapter 9, V. 327). It is evident, therefore, that the primary duty devolved upon the Vaisyas in the earliest stage of civilisation was to attend cattle only. Gradually, however, the wandering Aryans settled down in the Punjab with their cattle where land was fertile and fodder and water plentiful. Their attention was there directed to cultivation which gradually gave rise to two classes of men. Some Vaisyas entirely devoted themselves to the tending and rearing up of cattle, while others solely devoted to the art of agriculture and began to look upon the former occupation as a dirty piece of work. This even necessitated the injunction by Manu (*vide verse 328*) that no Vaisya shall be unwilling to tend and rear up cattle saying that it is a dirty work. In spite of the injunction, however, the two classes became distinctly separate, and

* Indian Empire.

came to be known as keepers of cattle or *gop*, and the agricultural as *krisak*. As time went on, there grew up another class among the agriculturists who began to trade on surplus product of agriculture which came afterwards to be known as Baniks. They again with the spiritual development of the Brahminical religion began to look down upon the occupation of the agricultural class as a dirty piece of work. Manu forbade the Brahmins and Kshattriyas to dig up earth for the purpose of cultivation even if they ever have to adopt the work of the Vaisyas in times of calamity for no sage would consider it a decent work, involving as it does to destruction of myriads of worms and insects by the ploughs and shovels. It is quite possible that agriculturists, while reclaiming lands for tillage and digging wells, came across rich fields of gold, silver, copper, iron and precious stones and engaged the services of the Baniks for their disposal. This gradually gave rise to the different classes of traders. Thus it would appear that the Vaisya caste consisted of three sub-divisions, the *Gops*, the *Krisaks* and the *Baniks*. Manu prescribed the duties of the Vaisyas in general terms, and this sub-division was not then completely marked out as it is now. But the Baniks, who had nothing to do with agriculture or cattle or ploughing, were naturally looked up as the most supreme class

among the Vaisyas. The duties of a Vaisya are "to keep herds of cattle, to bestow largesses to sacrifice, to read the scripture, to carry on trade, to lend at interest and cultivate land, * to ascertain the price of gems, pearls, corals, gold, &c., and cloth, camphor, spices, salt, &c., according to their relative qualities—higher, lower or middle."† Such were the status and professions of a Vaisya in the time of Manu. All the other Hindu law givers like Harit, Yajnavalka, and Parasara, have one and all followed Manu in their definition and description of the Vaisya caste. After the institutes of Manu the works, which furnish us with information of ancient Hindu manners and customs, are the two great epics of India, the Ramayan and the Mahabharat. In the Ramayan we find the simplicity of the ancient people, while in the Mahabharat we have the vivid description of a people lulling in luxury. Luxury is the result of civilisation and time. So one cannot but give precedence in point of time to the Ramayan. At the end of the first chapter of the Ramayan the poet says:—"A twice-born man (Brahmin) reading of the "acts of Rama becomes an orator,—one of Kshattrya birth, a king—the Banik (meaning the third order Vaisya) succeeds in his merchandise and the Sudra on hearing them (for he was not allowed to read) be-

* Manu Ch. I 90 (P. 3.)

† Manu Ch. IX 329.

comes great." As early as the days of Valmiki himself the Vaisyas followed the pure occupation of bankers and merchants and came to be called "Baniks," their occupation being named "baniya" or commerce. The term recurs in the Mahabharat: Santiparba Mokshadharma. "The well-known Tuladhara lives at Benares and carries on the business of a *Banik*. The Vaisya Tuladhara, who attained great proficiency in the doctrines of religion and theology, when asked by that renowned Brahmin Jajali, began to explain to him the secret and abtruse truths of religions." The word Banik is used for a Vaisya and it is met with in very many sacred books of the Hindus. Nor is this all; the great lexicons of the Hindus call the word Banik a synonymous term for Vaisya.* So we see Vaisyas are distinctly called *Baniks*. But such a state of things is not expected to last long; change must take place in the lapse of time and to observe such a change is only possible by going through the different accounts of the foreign travellers, who visited India from time to time.

* Vaisya, Vyavaharta, Vit, Vartika, Panita, Banik—*Raj Nirghanta*.
Vaidetika, Swarthawka, Nalgama, Baniya, Banika—*Amarkosā*.

CHAPTER II.

INDIA was the cradle of Buddhism and Chinese monks visited the country to learn the religion of Buddha. Fa Hien and Howen Thsang were such travellers who visited India in 397 and 629 A.D., respectively. Now from their accounts let us find out the home, living and profession of the Vaisyas of those times. Fa Hien finds the Vaisyas in Hidda, west of Peshwar and five miles south of Jellalabad, Sravasti in the kingdom of Kosala on the south bank of Rapti about forty eight miles north of Oudh, Pataliputra or Patna and mostly at Ceylon. He finds them most lavish in their charities. "The heads of the Vaisya families," says Fa Hien, "establish in the cities houses for dispensing charity and medicines. All the poor and destitute in the country, orphans, widows and childless men, maimed people and cripples, and all who are diseased, go to those houses and are provided with every kind of help and doctors examine their diseases. They get the food and medicines which their cases require, are made to feel at ease and when they are better they go away of themselves. They built Viharas (the residence of a recluse or priest) for the priests and endowed them with fields, houses, gardens and orchards along with the resident populations and their cattle, the grants being

engraved on plates of metal, so that afterwards they were handed down from king to king without any one daring to annul them." * "At the time of Hwen Thsang's visit, Kanouj was the capital of Raja Harsha Vardhana the most powerful sovereign in Northern India. The Chinese pilgrim calls him a Fei-she or Vaisya. The pilgrim records that from the time of his accession Harsha Vardhana was engaged in continual war for five and half years and that afterwards for 30 years he reigned in peace. The earliest historical notice of *Bairat* is that of the Chinese pilgrim Hwen Thsang in A.D. 634. According to him the capital was in circuit almost exactly corresponding with the size of the ancient mound on which the present town is built. The people were brave and bold and their king was of the race of Fei-she or Vaisya. It is 105 miles to the south-west of Delhi and 41 miles to the north of Jaipur. The main entrance to the valley is on the north-west along the bank of a small stream which drains the basin and forms one of the principal feeders of the Banganga. The soil is generally good. *Bairat* is situated on a mound of ruins. The present town does not occupy more than one-fourth of the original site. The surrounding fields are covered with broken pottery and fragments of slag from the ancient copper works

* The Ancient Geography of India by Major-General A. Cunningham, R.E.

and the general aspect of the valley is of a coppery red colour." "The old city called Bairatnagore is said to have been quite deserted for several centuries until it was re-peopled about 300 years ago, most probably during the long and prosperous reign of Akbar. It was in existence* in Akbar's time as it is mentioned in the "Ayni Akbari," as possessing very profitable copper mines. The number of houses in Bairat* is popularly reckoned at 1400, of which 600 are said to belong to Gaur Brahmins, 400 to *Agarwala Banyas*, 200 to miners and the remaining 200 to various other races."

It is now to be observed that during the time of Fa Hien's visit, there was no necessity for the Vaisyas forming themselves into a separate military caste, which is necessary to the existence and progress of the pastoral and agricultural tribes. It is true that the Kshattriyas were the defenders of the country. But it is said that the superior genius of Parasuram almost completely decimated the Kshattriyas. Or it might be that the Kshattriyas made depredations on the peace-loving Vaisyas and that at last created in them a desire to defend their interests. And it is for this reason that we may more properly say that the qualifications of a

* of.—Virat, the capital of Matsya, is celebrated in Hindu legends as the abode of the five Pandus during their exile of 12 years from Delhi or Indraprastha. The residence of Bhim Pandu is still shown on the top of a long low rocky hill about one mile to the north of the town.

soldier were brought into existence amongst the Vaisyas. Although it was never mentioned in the Hindu Sastras that the Vaisyas were military men, yet it is strange that there is frequent mention of Vaisya kings. It is rather mysterious, for how can the head of a class be a king unless he and his men are endowed with military virtues. General Cunningham is of opinion that it was only the Bais Rajputs who were imbued with military instincts and not the merchants of Hindustan. It does not stand to reason at all. It is circumstances which rule the destiny of mankind. It is through the operation of circumstances that the impossible becomes possible and *vice versa*. The peace-loving merchants can under the controlling influence of circumstances be turned into warriors and they may again be made to fall back to their former profession. Such indeed was the case. But it is reasonable to suppose that such was not the case with whole of the Vaisyas, *i. e.*, it was possible in one place and impossible in another. Apart from that General Cunningham says, Baiswara, the whole of southern Oude, was the seat of the Bais Rajputs and derived its name thence. And it is for these reasons we suppose he could not give it as his conclusive opinion that the military Banias were the Bais Rajputs alone, but he says "*It seems probable*", and Mr. Beal, the learned translator, could not

agree with him in this point. However, be this as it may, it is certain that through the progress of time the Vaisyas divided themselves into clans as conquerors and warriors, merchants and traders, and pastors and agriculturists, and the Vaisyas were called Baniks.

Time rolled on and did its work till we come to the most important part of the history of Bengal. It is no intention of ours to come abruptly to the time of Adisur. In fact the history of Bengal prior to his reign is simply very unsatisfactory and vague. Consequently we have nothing tangible to deal with. It is true we have glimmerings of fact culled from inscriptions and occasional records of Buddhistic writers to attest to the former greatness of the Bengalis under the Pal dynasty.* "Bengalis under Debpal Deb had conquered the earth from the source of the Ganges as far as the well-known bridge which was constructed by the enemy of Dasasya from the river of Lokecool (Lakshipore) as far as the ocean or the habitation of Barun; but this furnishes us with hardly anything to serve our purpose. During the reign of Adisur, the mighty and powerful king of Bengal, the social history of Bengal begins. It is he who dealt a death-blow to the cause

* Inscriptions on a copper-plate found at Munaghin : translated by Chas Wilkins, *Asiatic Researches* Vol. I. Buddal pillars inscription—Indian Asiatic Society 1894.

of Buddhism and gave a new life to Brahminism in Bengal. His fame travelled far and wide. This was a critical time. Although Buddhism had received severe blows at the hands of Sankaracharya, Udayanacharya and such like people, yet it was trying to regain its lost position. Thousands were embracing Buddhism, and others were leaving their mother country, lest their surroundings should force them to embrace the religion. In such sore and troubled times trade was not at a standstill, but it on the other hand enlarged its scope and the traders were found everywhere. It is they, who first heard the news of the ascendancy of a powerful king who was trying head and heart to restore Brahminism to a country—a country whose soil was rich and in which communication was easy. What can attract a merchant more than this? His religion will not be tampered with; a splendid field for trade, and cultivation is open to him and a just and powerful ruler to protect him. What more can he expect? Such a golden opportunity a merchant of good sense and judgment will hardly pass unnoticed. Here he can follow his religion as well as his profession without molestation.

Sanak a wealthy merchant, Vaisya by caste, left his mother country, the celebrated holy land of Rama and Bharat, with his family and near and dear ones to migrate to the holy land of Bengal. He

brought his family priest Jnan Chandra Misra, most probably because he had heard of the degraded condition of the Brahmans of Bengal from his underlings who had visited the place. It is no doubt interesting to observe that it was not the solitary instance of a Vaisya leaving his mother-country as the effect of the great struggle between the two opposing religions which brought to bear upon him to emigrate, but we find that the Vaisyas of Agraha in Hariana in Northern India did the same thing.* It is surely a striking coincidence that verifies and corroborates, to a great measure, the traditions current among the Vaisyas of Bengal. The strongest ground for believing that the Vaisyas did immigrate to Bengal is that the descendants of Sanaka and his followers, are all followers of the Yajur Veda. General Cunningham in his *Ancient Geography* says regarding Jajhote (the modern district of Bundelkhand):—"During the last twenty five years, I have traversed this tract of country repeatedly in all directions and have found the Jajhotia Brahmins distributed over the whole province, but not a single family to the north of the Jumna or to the west of the Betwa. In Chanderi itself, there are also *Jajhotia Baniyas* which alone is almost sufficient to show that the name is not a common family designation but a descriptive term of more general acceptance. The

* Sherring's *Hindu Tribes and Castes*.

Brahmins derive their name of Jajhotia from *Yajurhota*, an observance of Jajur Veda; but as the name is applied to *the Banias or grain dealers*, as well as to the Brahmans, I think it almost certain that it must be a mere geographical designation derived from their country of Jajhoti." This supposition seems to be rather untenable. Perhaps he was not aware that the Baniyas were Vaisyas and consequently they follow distinct Vedas. These Jajhotia Brahmins and Baniyas derived their name *not from the country they inhabited* but by following the observances of the Jajur Veda which General Cunningham himself admits as stated.

When the merchant prince Sanak arrived in Bengal, Adisur was then reigning at his court at Bikram-pore. It was not long before Sanak formed the acquaintance of the king, for it is the duty of every good and wise king to welcome a colonist, specially a merchant upon whose business the prosperity of a city or a place materially depends. Such was the case with Sanak. He settled at *Subarnagram* on the bank of the Brahmaputra. He carried on mercantile business on a large scale and consequently the little village by and by rose to great importance as a commercial mart. This attracted the notice of the king and as a wise and good ruler he appreciated the good services of the merchant prince.

It is said that in order to encourage the merchant, as often is the case, the king named the place *Subornogram* afterwards commonly called *Sonargaon*, meaning thereby that it is the best place of his kingdom. What could please a king more than the prosperity of his kingdom, and it was for this the king Adisur rewarded the energies of the merchant prince Sanak. He must have paid his respects in recognition of the favour so conferred upon him, for men of equal inclination are always drawn towards one another by mutual sympathy. The piety of the king and of the merchant brought them into so close relations with each other as to establish a close friendship between the two.

One day, it is said, Sanak the merchant, finding the king pining away and weighed down, asked its cause. The Raja laid bare his heart to the merchant. On hearing which he consoled the Raja and soon found out means to redress it. The Raja following the advice of his friend and with his help invited five Brahmans from Kanouj. This idea had never entered the Rajah's head before; if it had, he would have done the same thing long before, and it, therefore, proves beyond doubt that he was advised to do so. If one says that it was the priests who advised the king; if they were so competent as that then there would have been no necessity to bring five Brahmins from Kanouj. It is not that, that there were no

Brahmans then in Bengal but that on account of the ascendancy of Buddhism during the Pal Dynasty they had been degraded. Moreover we find the following facts from the extracts of Dakshin Raria Ghatak Karika in Sabdakalpadruma.

“ As the king of Gods Indra reigned in Heaven so the king Adisur ruled the earth. His administration is like that of Judhisteer and he tempered justice with great politeness. His prowess brought ruin upon his adversary as the sun dispels the darkness. Versed as he was in theology he in person defeated the Buddhists and drove them out from his kingdom of Gaur. He was always mindful of worshipping the feet of his supreme Diety. Once upon a time he enquired of the fit man in his Court. ‘ Where can now be found Brahmans capable of performing Yag Yanga, (the religious sacrificial rites) and well bred Sudras.’ The man in reply said—Maharaj ! The Brahmans of Kanouj are independent by the virtue of their religious fervour where they like the deer live with ease and comfort subject to no body. Rajadhiraj Maharaja Sree Bira Singha, the ruler of that Kanouj, is an intelligent, high minded and pious king. The Brahmans of that country are experts in sacrificial ceremonies, competent in providing remedies for sins and glorious like Vedavyasa and they also frequent the court. Oh ! Ruler of Gaur ! you try to bring

those gods of earth to this place. On hearing this the king of Gaur with the intent of bringing home those Brahmins attended with families servants and Sudras as well versed in letters gladly composed a very complimentary letter to Bir Singha and despatched it through the fit man in the Court." Who could this fit man be but Sanak a trader, for in those times communication was not so easy as it is now.

Now it is established beyond doubt that it was the Vaisya merchant Sanaka who brought the five Brahmins into Bengal and reclaimed it. Nor is this all. What could lead the king the present Sanaka with a copper plate with an inscription as this :—" In order to increase the honor of the Vaisyas of this place who are engaged in gold trade, I give them the designation of "*Subornobanik*"* That these words are full of feelings of gratefulness needs no comment. The Vaisyas, who had been, at one time, called "*Baniks*," were now in the eleventh century called "*Subornobaniks*." Such a name only the Vaisya emigrants of Bengal received and not others. This name was never in existence prior to this era. In the Vedas, Manu, Ramayan, Mahabharat and eighteen other Purans of the Hindus, we do not come across the

* "एवमर्थवाणिज्यकारित्वा इत्यस्मिन्निविष्टां मया ।
सुवर्णवणिगितप्रख्यादस्ता सम्मानवर्धये" ॥

name of Subornabanik, nor is there even a chance allusion thereto. Any work therefore in which this name is to be met with, must be of later date than the eleventh century when the name of Subornobanik was given to the Vaisyas in the manner described. It must be admitted that these were the glorious days of the Vaisyas of Bengal. But the day of Nemesis was at hand. The descendant of Adisur, Ballal Sen, did not pull on well with that of Sanaka, Ballavananda. Such was not the case at the outset but took place later on, and the root of it is money. Money is the root of all evils. Its fruits are bitterly enjoyed by many in this world and these are better understood than described.

CHAPTER III.

DURING the reign of Ballal Sen that the Subornobaniks hitherto honored were deprived of their social status and what is more they were much lowered and looked down upon as amongst the most degraded of Hindu castes. Fortunately we have a clear account of the degradation of *Subornobaniks* the true and pure blooded Vaisyas. Gopal Bhatta, the teacher of Raja Ballal Sen, was directed by the king to write his biography. This was done and the work was called "Ballal

Charit." He dedicated the work to the Raja saying "My name is Gopal Bhatta, I am the teacher of the king and dedicate this work to him with a due care for his favour." In another place he says,—“At the request of the king Ballal, I write his biography with the geneology, gottra and family history of all the castes.” So it is clear that the *sole object* of Gopal Bhatta was *to please Ballal* and even in it the facts in connection with the degradation of the Subornobaniks are stated, though every care was taken by the author to justify the acts of Ballal and thereby to degrade the Subornobaniks. But *a clear and impartial account* is to be found in what has been recorded by Ananda Bhatta—a descendant of Gopal Bhatta and truly called the biographer of Ballal. Ananda Bhatta made clear the object of his writing the biography by saying “*being afraid of incurring the displeasure of the king and its necessary evil consequences, Gopal Bhatta left his ‘Ballal Charita’ incomplete. I now undertake to complete it by relating in brief the life of that king, born in the dynasty of Sena and renowned under the name of Ballal.*” To do this Ananda Bhatta had to write the whole history anew and he did so. We shall place side by side the two accounts which will speak for themselves. Gopal Bhatta writes:—“In the kingdom of Ballal Sen the misbehaving Subornobaniks became very proud

of their wealth and began to disrespect and insult the king and Brahmans. The good and wise king who was competent to punish offenders got annoyed and angry with them and thought of inflicting exemplary punishments on them. The leader of those Subornobaniks was one Ballavananda by name who was wealthy, proud, notorious, disloyal and rebellious. The king, in order to bring him into submission by punishment, sent a messenger to him with a writ of command. * * * The king in performing a yajna gave to each of the Brahmins the figure of a cow made of gold. The Subornobaniks cut these golden figures of a cow and so they became polluted. And for this reason they were persecuted and many of them were banished from the kingdom." * * * "These Vaisya merchants have been degraded to the class of Sudras in this age of Kaliyuga on account of their misbehaviour." Ananda Bhatta writes of the character of Ballal :—" He was no doubt a bastard, mischievous and a notorious prince. He was profligate in addicting himself to the love of Chandal and Dome girls, was the persecutor of the good and honest people, zealous of other's fortune and covetous to grasp other's kingdom and wealth * * * The King then revolted against the prince of Manipur but he was shamefully driven back out of these hilly places. This led him to wage a protracted

war with the Manipur prince, and for the expenses of it, the king of the Sen Dynasty had to borrow large sums of money from the rich banker Ballavananda Adhya. But having exhausted all his resources the stupid king made again and again fresh demands of money, but the banker, having understood the evil motive, declined at last to advance any further sum. This was the cause which led the king Ballal to be angry upon the Subornobaniks and lowered their social status." The marked difference between the accounts and the facts stated above, cannot but lead to the conclusion that it was the hand of an arbitrary and unjust prince which lowered the social status of the true Vaisyas of Bengal and what has been said against them in the first named work was only to please the fancy of a reprobate king and this it was which misled the people. Nor was this all. In both the biographies we come across the solemn declaration of Ballal in very strong terms to degrade the Subornobaniks and the issue of an edict denouncing them. "The angry king declared," say the biographers, "I promise if I do not include the Subornobaniks among the low classes and that if I do not give pain to the Subornobanik Ballavananda and others, then I shall be liable to the penalties that attach to the sins of killing Brahmans, women and kine. This promise, I make in connection with the Subornobaniks, is as true as that made by Bhimsen

with reference to the killing of the hundred children of the blind king Dhritarastra. From this date it will be of no use for the Subornobaniks to wear the sacred thread, because they did not perform the necessary religious rites and as non-performance of the prescribed religious rites makes a man Sudra, these traders, specially the Subornobaniks, who steal cows and kill them, are Sudras and henceforth their religious rites will be like those as prescribed for the Sudras. They shall be, therefore, from this date considered as fallen and shall be shunned by honest and respectable people. Those, who will dine, associate and sit in the same seat, partake of the same food with them, shall be considered as fallen and also those Brahmans who will perform religious ceremonies on their behalf shall be taken as fallen Brahmins." One can just mark the discrepancy in the edict. In the first place, it says "They did not perform their religious rites" and then it goes on to say "their religious rites shall become like those of the Sudras" and lastly *it orders them to drop their sacred thread*. This clearly proves that the Subornobaniks were not then backward in observing the professions of the true Vaisyas. What has subsequently happened came about by the anger of Ballal, who wanted to deprive and, in fact in some measure, did deprive them of their true social status in the Hindu Society.

Now we shall go into details as to how the Subornobaniks incurred the Raja's displeasure which led him take such arbitrary proceedings against them, so as to deprive them of their sacred thread and to exclude them from the pale of the higher castes. Its graphic description we find in Ballala Carita * :—

“Ballala Carita means the biography of Ballal Sen, the greatest king of the Sen dynasty in Bengal, in the 12th century. Two complete Mss. have been obtained written in different parts of Burdwan, Bengal, one in 1707 A. D., the year of Aurangzeb's death, and the other in 1198 of the Bengali Era.”

“The Book was composed in 1432 by Ananda Bhatta, descendant of Ananta Bhatta, whom Ballal Sen settled in East Bengal by a grant of land. It was written at the court of Buddhimanta Khan, the Raja of Navadvipa, a great admirer of Caitanya who flourished about this time.”

“Ananda Bhatta's book is based on three previous works by three writers, contemporaries of Ballal Sen, *viz.*, (1) Vyasa Purana by Simha Giri, a Caiva monk from Vadarikacrama in the Himalayas who converted Ballal into the Caiva faith; (2) Ballal Carita by Carana Datta, one of the great poets under the same dynasty; (3) Jayamangala Gatha by Kalidasa Nandi mentioned

* Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, No. X, December 1901.

in Batu Dass's Anthology compiled in 1205 A.D. The information given in Ananda Bhatta's work agrees to a great extent, with the results of modern historical researches, and so it can be accepted as an authentic record of Ballala's reign."

* "Vallála in these chapters is said to have performed a great sacrifice, invited all the four castes with the innumerable mixed castes, and fed them and honored them* all according to their deserts. The Sonara banias, however, who prided themselves as Vaicyas, had no separate accommodation provided for them. They complained and they were told to go with the clean Cudras. They resented it and left the place. Their overbearing conduct was reported to the king and he declared that they should be degraded and any Brahmana teaching them or officiating in their religious ceremonies should be excommunicated. This order of degradation was communicated to all the officers of the state and proclaimed by beat of drums throughout Vallála's vast empire. The Brahmans complained that the banias have a fair color and that they are very handsome. They should not be allowed to wear the holy thread, because in that case, Brahmans by mistake may make obeisance to them, and so Vallála ordered that their holy thread should be snatched away.

* Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. No. 1, January 1902.

Most of the banias fled from Vallála's dominions and those who remained had to submit to his terms, *i. e.*, had to give up the holy thread. But the rich influential and haughty bania cannot be expected to tamely brook all this *zulum* on them. They retaliated in a manner worthy of banias. The slave-traders were Brahmanas and the bania use to grant them accommodation. They now stopped slave trade in Vallála's kingdom. People in great distress implored the king to do something to alleviate their sufferings, and he proclaimed that the Kaivarttas should henceforth be regarded as clean Cudras and that their services should be accepted. Thousands and thousands of Kaivarttas accepted domestic service, and their leader, Maheca, who was a 'Mahattara' (a noble man) already, was made a Mahamandalika, a provincial Governor, and sent to Daksinaghata with all his warlike followers. So Vallála degraded the banias and raised the Kaivarttas. The garland-makers, the potters, and the blacksmiths then implored the king to raise their position in the caste hierarchy and the Raja proclaimed that they should be regarded as clean Cudras. He made Dhara, his servant, a Mahattara (a nobleman) and his barber a 'Thakura.'

"This is a short summary of the three most important and three most authentic chapters of

the Carita connected with the name of Carana Datta. Now I will try to interpret them. The charges against the Sonarbanias were (1) That they left Vallála's feast because they thought they were slighted and treated as Cudras; (2) they ridiculed the Brahmanas, called them names, and openly charged them with being the descendants of female slaves; (3) their leader, to whom they were greatly attached, sided with the Palas, the Buddhist kings of Magadha, with whom Vallála was often at war: and (4) that this leader gave his daughter in marriage to the Buddhist Pala king of Magadha and therefore he had great influence in his own caste."

"These charges have been formulated in Carana's chapters. But in another chapter, namely in chapter II. for which Ananda Bhatta himself is responsible, there are two more charges very distinct. One is that Ballabha, the headman of the banias, refused to advance Vallála money to prosecute a war against Magadha, though on a former occasion he advanced a crore of rupees. The other is that the Banias slighted the Brahmanas and slighted Vallála too. Their conduct was haughty and overbearing."

"These are the charges on which Vallála degraded a whole caste and excommunicated them from the community of four castes and they are

of a grave nature. The charges show that the banias were Buddhists. It is the Sets and Banias who figure prominently in the Buddhist records. They took to Buddhism in numbers. And in Bengal where Hinduism, or, to say more strictly, Brahminism had to be reintroduced under the Brahmans and their faithful adherents, the Kayasthas, the Buddhists, formed the upper lay community, and they always looked with a jealous eye on the preponderance of a rival faith, of the priesthood of that faith, and of its lay followers. "

" Vallála as represented by Ananda Bhatta, early sympathised with the Buddhists, I mean Tantrika Buddhists of a later date. Following the obscene rites of those degraded Buddhists, he used the girl of an actress, a *nati*, and a *candali* of twelve years of age. But a monk from Vadarikacrama converted him into Caivism and he became an out-and-out Brahminist and, I believe, a persecutor of his former faith as all apostates are. When Vallála was a sympathiser of Buddhism, Ballabha advanced him money for his warfare. But with the change of his religion the attitude of Ballabha, his financier, changed. He joined the Palas of Magadha, gave his daughter in marriage to a Pala king and incurred the displeasure of Vallála. The sacrifice turned the public sympathy in favor of the Raja and he was not slow in taking

advantage of the public feeling. Alone he could not degrade them, he must have Brahmanas with him and on this occasion he found the Brahmanas fully prepared to co-operate with him, because the banias slighted them, abused them, and wanted to be their rivals."

"That at Vallála's time the caste system in Bengal required re-organisation is plain from history. I have elsewhere shown that in Hioun Thsang's time Buddhism was the dominant religion in Bengal, though the heretics were not unknown. Our own tradition shows that Adicura about Hioun Thsang's time saw that the few Brahmans in Bengal knew nothing of Hinduism. They were perhaps traders as they were in Buddhist countries. He brought Brahmans and Kayasthas to Bengal. They increased and multiplied for centuries and included old Brahmanists and some converts, for in a mixed community such conversions are frequent and the Hindu society looked tolerably big. The Brahmans and Kayasthas formed the backbone of the society, as the monks and their followers formed the backbone of the Buddhist community. But there was a vast population on whom faith sat rather loose. The Brahmanas could not go beyond the Cudras. The aborigines were outside their operation, but the Buddhist had no such scruples. They took in their fold all who

came, so a re-organisation was necessary in Vallála's time. He degraded the Banias and raised the Kaivarttas. The castes below Cudras were called Antyajas. If they offered a glass of water to a good Brahmana he is bound to reject it. They were semi-Buddhists. The Buddhist monks, however, claimed them as theirs, as they do everywhere. The Brahmanas claimed as theirs. But these Kaivarttas were very influential. I read a paper sometime ago, in which I tried to show that about fifty years before Vallála, about the year 1080 A.D., they drove away the Pala kings from North Bengal and set up Bhima Divoka as their king. They killed a Pala king and imprisoned another. But at last Ramapála defeated them and broke their power. They were smarting under this discomfiture when Vallála from Western Bengal invaded North Bengal and conquered it from the Palas. East Bengal, too, fell into his hands with its capital Rampála. From the terms in which Vallála speaks of these Kaivarttas he seems to have derived much benefit from them. He was anxious that they should get some recognised position in Hindu Society. They helped him in finding out his son Laksmana, when that prince fled away before the anger of a step-mother, and he told them "Gacchadhvam Vyavaharyyatam," that is, be a clean caste among the Hindus

and at the same time he changed their occupation. They were fishermen and boatswains, but he made them agriculturists also. Their anxiety to serve the Brahmanas and others has already been adverted to."

"By inducing them to accept domestic service, and by inducing their leaders to accept high state appointments in a quarter away from the centre of their influence, Vallála freed North Bengal from the turbulence of these restless people. Daksinaghata of Vallála is the same as Mandalaghata of the present day, where Kaivarttas form the bulk of the population and the majority of the upper classes. The name seems to have changed from Daksinaghata to Mandalaghata, because the Kaivartta chief Maheca was created a Mahamandalika, the great Mandala."

"The other castes made clean by Vallála, as mentioned by Carana, were Malakara, Kumbhakara and Karmaṅkara. These are never regarded as Antyajas, so their incorporation means a reconversion into Brahmanism. Vallála gave high offices of state even to low caste men. He made a Kaivartta a Mahamandalika. A Napit a Mahattara, or noble man."

"So far the information is received from Vallála's contemporary, Carana. At the end of the book, however, Ananda Bhatta on his own authority gives a few verses of what is termed the Appendix to

the Vallála carita. These, when translated, run thus:—

“ From Brahmana in Kshatriya girls were born Chetri, who are also called Rajaputra. The Sonar banias have become Vratya or degraded for loss of the holy thread. Gopa (cowherd), Mali (makers of flower garlands), Tamboli (betel sellers), Kamsaras (workers in bell metal), Tanti (weavers), Cankhika (workers in conch shells), Kulala (potters), Karmakaras (blacksmiths), Napita (barbers) are Navasayakas (nine arrows). Tailika (the oilman), Gandhika (spice and incense vendor), and Vaidyas are clean Cudras. Of all the Sat-Cudras, the Kayastha is declared to be the best.”

“ This is addressed by Ananda Bhatta to the Raja of Navadvipa to whom he dedicated Vallála carita. So this relates to the state of things as existed in 1510, and it is not very different from the state of things to-day. ”

In Bengal only the Vaisyas, called Subornobaniks, were deprived of the use of the sacred thread, but Vaisyas of places other than this who were not in the province of Ballal enjoyed the privilege. In Marco Polo we find* :—

“ These are the best and most honorable merchants that can be found. No consideration whatever can induce them to speak an untruth,

even though their lives should depend upon it. They have also an abhorrence of robbery or of purloining the goods of other persons. They are likewise remarkable for the virtue of continence, being satisfied with the possession of one wife. When any foreign merchant, unacquainted with the usages of the country, introduces himself to one of these, and commits to his hands the care of his adventure, this Brahmin undertakes the management of it, disposes of the goods, and renders a faithful account of the proceeds, attending scrupulously to the interests of the stranger, and not demanding any recompense for his trouble, should the owner uncourteously omit to make him the gratuitous offer."

Marco Polo put these Vaisyas or Bantias under the distinct head of Brahmanas which conveys no other meaning but that they were "Dwija" or twice-born and used the sacred thread and the same view is shared in his notes as below.*

"Some parts of this description seem to apply to a class of people wholly engaged in commerce, and there is much reason to believe that in this chapter our author treated, not of *Brahmans* only, but also of the class of traders called *banyans*, or in the Italian, *baniani*, which his translators, mistaking them for the same word, have confounded :

a conjecture that is rendered the more probable from the striking variation in the orthography of what might be considered a familiar term ; for although written *Bramini* by Ramusio, and *bragmani* in the Italian epitomes, it is in the Basle edition *abrajamim*, and in the manuscripts, *abrajani*. Paolino speaks of the “ *baniani e cetti, mercanti astuti, diligenti, laboriousi, sobri, frugali, ricchi* ”

The following chapters of Ballál Charita will fully testify to the history of the deprivation of the Vaisyas of Bengal of their sacred thread and of their exclusion from the pale of the higher castes.

Extract from Chapter II of the Ballal Charita

“ONCE upon a time Raja Vallála borrowed a crore of rupees from Vallabhananda, the richest man of his time, for the purpose of conquering the King of Udantapur ; but being repeatedly defeated in battles in the neighbourhood of Manipur, he determined to make a grand effort and sent a messenger to Vallavavanik, demanding a fresh loan. Vallabha was unwilling to lend him any further sums as he had already been unable to meet his dues. In spite of this Vallála sent a messenger to Vallabha. The messenger acquainted Vallabha with the order of the King at Vallabha's fort,

named Samkhakot. The messenger acquainted him with the king's order which was as follows :—
' Because it has become absolutely necessary for us to march against the country of Kilat with a grand army composed of six divisions, You Vallabha Chandra ! are required to advance a crore and a half of gold coins on this order of mine without any loss of time. ' "

" In reply Vallabha said, I see our king is a great spendthrift. He is bringing disgrace on his own family. What could we say to this ? We can never regard this as the work of an honest man. Why this preparation for war ? It is the duty of kings to govern territories already acquired. This is an impious war. For the good of his subjects, our Maharaja should give up this villainous idea. War is very sinful. It leads men to the infernal regions. It also brings on complete ruin of the subjects. I see the king is despotic. He has no regard for the duties of his high office. He does not feel the impropriety of not protecting his subjects. What is the good of extending the empire ? Does he not know that there is no one on earth who can convert a Kshatriya into a pious and religious man and can transform a mace into a bow ? If a king unmindful of the welfare of his subjects is anxious only for his revenue, serious odium attaches to his name and his residence in the in-

fernal regions is assured. The Koshatakis have also said this. However, when I see that harassing the enemy is the great end and aim of politics, we need not discuss politics here. I am a small man, humble as grass. Even less I am being harassed on account of this war, so I should rather speak the real fact. You may tell the king that if he put me in possession of the place, named, Harikeli within his dominions in usufructuary mortgage and give me a written engagement to the effect, that I shall be entitled to recoup myself out of the revenue arising therefrom until he pays me up, I am prepared to advance him the desired sum of money."

"Upon this the messenger returned in haste to Vikramapur and acquainted Vallála with what Vallabha had said. On hearing it the Maharaja became inflamed with rage as if a heap of straw had been set on fire. As drops of water often issue from the burning wood, so drops of perspiration appeared on Vallála's face, copper-coloured with rage. Irritated at the conduct of an individual Vanik, Vallabha, he began to harass the whole race of Vaniks. On the pretext of collecting revenue he deprived them of their wealth. He declared forfeited all moneys deposited by them in civil courts and never returned them in spite of all importunities. Though intermarriage be-

tween castes was interdicted in Kali Yuga, he forcibly took the daughter of Govinda Adhya to be his wife."

"In this way the king instigated by his flatterers harassed and oppressed the Vaniks and at last sent for a messenger and spoke to him thus:— 'All the Suvarnavaniks in my dominion are very wicked. They are proud of their purse. They do not care for the Brahmans and have no regard for me who is a Brahma-Kshatriya. This Vallabhananda again, is the head of the Vaniks in wealth. For this reason he is very proud and unmannerly.'"

"In this way he threw the whole blame on the Vaniks, but sent the messenger to Samkhakot again. He tried various means to bring over Vallabha to his side, sometimes by threats, sometimes by coaxing. He made a great thing of it."

"The Provincial Governors at this time, adopting improper means, began to exact double the usual amount of tolls from the Vaniks at ferries."

"Here ends the Second Chapter, entitled the harassment of the Vaniks in the Second Part of Vallala Charita uttered by Sri Ananda Bhatta."

Extract from Chapter XXII of the Ballal Charita.

“LATER on the blood and other relations of the king, *vanaks* and *rajputras* united and entered the place prepared for dinner. When these high souled persons were seated for their seats (*Asans*) and when Vallála was feeding them to their delight, numbers of Satsudras entered the other places for dinner with zeal and hauteur but no place was found appointed for the Vaisyas to dine. On this they whispering to each other and desirous of leaving the king's place stood up, when some had gone out and others were on the point of leaving, Vima Sena as if in an humble guise followed them and said ‘O *Mahajanas*! why do you go away without partaking of the feast. You can by all means speak your mind to me.’ Hearing this the Vaniks said ‘O high minded man! hear us. The whole place has been defiled by the touch of lower castes; therefore we are unable to partake of the feast here. The irascible Vima Sena treating these words with contempt insulted them by saying ‘Dare Sudras say so?’ Then there was an altercation; and Vima Sena, the pet of the king, greatly enraged uttered rude words to them. Upon this the Vaniks shouting and clamouring went away from the king's palace like clouds at the end of the rainy season.”

" Here ends the 22nd chapter entitled the dishonouring of the Vaniks in Vallala Charita by Sarana Dutta included in the second part of Vallala Charita uttered by Sri Ananda Bhatta. "

Extract from Chapter XXIII of the Ballal Charita.

" THE next day Bhima, the pet of the king, approaching the lord of the world seated in the assembly with knees down on the earth, began to address his Majesty thus. ' Your Majesty ! all the parties of the Sudra have been satisfied with the feast but the Suvarnabaniks insolently went away without partaking of it. The Vaniks are very wicked, immodest and proud of their race. Improperly ambitious they aspire to eat in the same line with the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas. Though they found the place of the feast devoid of Sudras, yet insulting your majesty, they went away according to their wishes. The inordinately ambitious Vallabha is the leader of all the Vaniks siding with the Palas. O Maharaja, he assumes a hostile attitude towards thee. He is greatly honoured among his caste, because the king of Magadha is his son-in-law. He is so proud that he considers the whole earth as a small clay pot.' "

" The king hearing the above words of Vima Sena got inflamed with rage like fire kindled

into flames by clarified butter poured upon it. Seated on a high royal throne the king ground his teeth like rattling thunder and his face reddened with rage like a flash of lightning, and his crown resplendent with diamonds fell from his head while his whole body trembled with rage like a meteor from the sky at dusk. Then king Vallala with his eyes rolling in rage took a solemn oath for crushing the pride of the Vaniks. The king thundered forth. 'If I do not put down the haughty Suvarnavanikas into the level of Sudras and do not inflict punishment on the dark souled merchant, Vallava Chandra, I shall be guilty of all the sins that are produced by killing cows and Brahmanas. Just as Vina Sena (of old) had vowed for the destruction of the children of Dhritarastra, so is my vow for putting down these people. From this day these are to be taken as Sudras. Useless will be from this day their wearing of the holy thread. The Brahmanas who after this will officiate in their ceremonies, teach them or accept gifts from them, though flaming with Brahmanic lustre, will be degraded. There is no escape from this.' "

"This command was in time proclaimed throughout the empire, and the Vaniks assembled held consultation with their castemen trembling with rage at this act of injustice of the king and

prohibited all slave-traders from proceeding to the town of Ganda. The Vaniks gave twice or thrice the price of slaves. Men of all the other castes were in great distress for want of servant. At this great calamity the subjects approached the king, (the Lord of the world) who began to consider what was to be done. Unable to hit at any other means he commanded the Brahmans to do as follows:—

“For the benefit of the people, the Kaivarttas should be employed in menial services. Hearing of the command of the king, the Kaivarttas, desirous of entering into such service, came to the palace by hundreds and thousands. They had each a piece of cloth round their necks and had their palms joined. Then the king addressed thus: ‘I order that menial service should be your livelihood. Go and be regarded as clean caste.’”

“Mahesha, the head-man of the Kaivarttas, who had already been made a Mahatra was now honored with the rank and title of *Mahamandalika* and he was sent with all his followers fully equipped to Dakshinaghat.”

“The Malakars (garland makers), the Kumbhakers (potters), the Karmakaras (blacksmiths) on another occasion with their palms joined and each with a piece of cloth round their necks, approached the king. Satisfied with their service the king

declared that by his order they would be accepted as Satsudras. The king at whose words, the unclean becomes clean and the clean becomes unclean is really a divinity. In course of time the king degraded the low Brahmins who were traders and were very wicked from the Brahmanhood altogether. He gave the title of *Mahatru* to Dhara engaged in his menial service. He gave his barber the title of Thakur (noble man)."

"At this time some of the Brahmans held a consultation among themselves, approached the king and addressed him thus:—'The Suvarnabaniks in their pride always declare that they are the best of all castes both by birth and descent. O king! They ridicule us Brahmans of high family saying that we are born of maidservants. The Suvarnabaniks are very handsome and are invested with the holy thread. Brahmanas often do obeisance to them by mistake. O lord of the earth! They should be made outcastes so that they may not vie with us Brahmanas of high family. O lord of men! the insulting terms in which they speak of your Majesty (the long lived) born in the family of Brahma-Kshattriya it is not necessary to mention at present. All of them should be deprived of their holy thread. Thus deprived of their *dharma* they are sure to be a fallen race.' So saying to the king the Brahmans stopped and the king enraged

thundered forth. Having heard that the vaniks had not yet been deprived of their *dharma* the king ordered that their holy thread be taken away. He ordered his officers to see that the Vaniks living in his dominions give up their holy thread on pain of severe punishment. The officers of the king in every city inhabited by the Vaniks proclaimed the royal edict by beat of drum throughout all the bazars and in all shopping places. The bankers who were afraid of losing their *dharma* and yet not inclined to obey the royal edict lost no time in migrating away into different directions with their families and properties. Some went to Ajodhya, others to Monghyr, some to Chandra-majuta, some to Patna, some to Udaypur, some to Mangad, some to Binitapur, some to Tumlook and some to Chinkhala. Those who were unable to migrate gave up their holy thread made either of gold or cotton through fear of punishment."

"At that time Ballala observing the disorganisation among the races of Brahmans and Kshattriyas, held a consultation with those versed in the Vedas. In determining the Brahmanhood and the Kshattriyahood of his people he took into consideration importance of their origin and compelled them to pass through purifying ceremonies."

"Here ends the 23rd Chapter entitled the raising and degrading the various castes in Vallala

Charita by Saran Datta included in the second chapter of Vallala Charita uttered by Sri Ananda Bhatta."

When the decree of the king was passed very few remained there except those on whom the climate of the country told too severely. They were physically incapable to move out an inch even if degraded to death. Hundreds fled to different directions to get out of reach of the cruel hands of the angry king as in Ballala Charita we do come across, for independence was the last thing they could lose. This was one of the characteristics of the Vaisyas which none can gainsay and of which Bernier writes in his travels :—" Some years after the death of a wealthy Banyan or gentile merchant who had always been employed in the king's service, and, like the generality of his countrymen, had been a notorious userer, the son became clamorous for a certain portion of the money. The widow refusing to comply with the youngman's request on account of his profligacy and extravagance he had the baseness and folly to make Shah Jehan acquainted with the real amount of the property left by his father, about two hundred thousand crowns. The Mogul immediately summoned the old lady and in the presence of the assembled Omrahs commanded her to send him immediately one hundred thousand *roupies* and to put

her son in possession of fifty thousand. Having issued this peremptory injunction, he ordered the attendants to turn the widow out of the hall. Although surprised by so sudden a request and somewhat offended at being rudely forced from the chamber without an opportunity of assigning the reasons of her conduct, yet this courageous woman did not lose her presence of mind. She struggled with the servants exclaiming that she had something further to divulge to the king. 'Let us hear what she has to say' cried Chah Jehan. 'Hazret Salamet! (Heaven preserve your Majesty) it is not perhaps without some reason that my son claims the property of his father; he is our son and consequently our heir. But I would humbly inquire what kinship there may have been between Your Majesty and my deceased husband to warrant the demand of one hundred thousand roupies.' Chah Jehan was so well pleased with this short and artless harangue* and so amused with the idea of a Banyan or gentile tradesman having been related to the sovereign of the Indies that he burst into a fit of laughter and commanded that the widow should be left in the undisturbed enjoyment of the money of her deceased husband."

When we find a Banyan woman fearlessly opening

* " Whose heart conceives no sinister device ;
Fearless he plays with flames and trades on ice."

out her heart before the Emperor of Delhi what wonder then that Ballavananda had not done the same thing before the king of Bengal. But mark the difference, the Emperor was pleased with the remark of a woman and left her in the undisturbed possession of it, while Ballala in his mean-mindedness punished Ballavaananda in the way mentioned above.

CHAPTER IV.

LATTERLY the Vaisyas or Baniks were called Banians, which the following quotations from the accounts of various travellers will prove beyond all doubts.

Bernier says:—"The Hindoos then affirm that God whom they call Achar, the immoveable or immutable, has sent to them four books to which they give the names Beths (Vedas), a word signifying science, because, according to them, these books comprehend all the sciences. The first of the books is named 'Athervabed,' the second 'Zagurbed' the third 'Rikbed' and the fourth 'Sambed.' These books enjoin that the people shall be divided, as in fact they are, most effectually, into four tribes: first the tribe of Brahmins or interpreters of the law; secondly, the tribe Quetterys or warriors; thirdly, the tribe of Bescue or merchants and tradesmen commonly called *Banyans* and

fourthly, the tribe of Seydra or artisans and labourers "

Tavernier writes :—" The third caste is that of the Banians who attach themselves to trade, some being shroffs, *i. e.*, money changers or bankers, and the other brokers by whose agency the merchants buy and sell. "

In Ayeen Akbari we find—"There is a branch of the Biess (Bais) tribe called in the Hindovee (Hindu) language Bunnick (Vanika) or more commonly Bunnyah or grain merchants."

So we find that Vaisyas are called Banyas* Subornobaniks are also called Sonarbanya. It proves that they are true Vaisyas. That the Subornobaniks were the Banias can, however, be otherwise proved in the most satisfactory manner. When the crude question of castes was not mooted, when the people were greater lovers of truth than of anything else, when they knew to realise the truth of the saying that innocence is bliss, then they used to call themselves Banyan. This fact has been clearly recorded in the old legal documents and in the documents of such men who

* It is derived from Vaniya (Guzrati Vaniyo) and that from the Sanskrit Vanij a trader. The terminal nasal may be a Portuguese addition (as in palanquin U) or may be taken from the plural form Vaniyan—*Vide Glossary of Anglo-Indian Words by Yule and Burnell.*

"Baniya or Bunya corruptly Banian Banyan"—*Wilson.*

"The term Bunniah or Banian is properly applied to the great trading caste, but it also means a trader, and is often so applied."—*Sir George Campbell.*

never served under any company or person. It can easily be shown to the satisfaction of all if required. What better proof can be adduced than this ?

The late Dr. Jogendra Nath Bhattacharyya, M. A., D. L., President of the College of Pandits, Nadiya, author of a Commentary on Hindu Law Vyavastha Kalpadruma, &c., in his work on Hindu Castes and Sects, says:—"The word Baniya is a corruption of the Sanskrit word Banik, which means a merchant. The Baniyas are certainly entitled to be regarded as Vaisyas * * *. The Baniyas Proper of Bengal are divided into two classes, *viz.*

I. Suvarnabaniks—Gold merchants

II. Gandha Banias—Spice merchants."

In 1868 Mr. Talboys Wheeler in his Introduction to the *Travel of a Hindu*, speaking of the author, has remarked as follows—"He belongs to the class of Baniya, a caste of Hindu traders, who hold the same rank as that of the ancient Vaisya or merchants in the caste system of Manu."

Mr. O'Donnell at page 265, Vol III, of his Report has recorded, as the result of his investigations based on the highest authorities on the subject, that Vaisyas Proper include (among a few other castes) the Baniya also, and that the Baniya includes the Subornavaniks of Bengal is abundantly clear from the same report. He in several places

of his report has distinctly stated that the Baniyas, which evidently include the Suvarnavaniks, form a factor in the upper classes of the Hindu social fabric of Bengal.

Mr. Risley also in Vol. II, page 261, of his valuable work "The Tribes and Castes in Bengal" has in his article on "Suvarnavaniks" used the terms Suvarnavaniks and Baniyas as interchangeable.

Lastly, the Vaisyas from time immemorial were connected and associated with one or other of the Avatars or Incarnations of God, the Almighty Father. For instance, Anathpindika popularly called Sudatta (meaning alms giver) for fabulous charity bought a beautiful Vihara (the residence of a recluse) Jetavan where Buddha lived for a longer time than in any other place. In this connection Fa Hien writes:—
"Six or seven li (Chinese mje) north-east from the Jetavana, mother Vaisakha (the wife of Anath pindika) built another Vihara, to which she invited Buddha and his monks and which is still existing. To each of the great residences for the monks at the Jetavana Vihara there were two gates one facing the east and the other facing the north. The park (containing the whole) was the space of ground which the (Vaisya) head Sudatta purchased by covering it with gold coins. The Vihara was exactly in the centre. Here Buddha lived for a longer time than at any other place preaching his

law and converting men." Brisavanu, a Vaisya was the father-in-law of Krishna. Udharan Datta was an associate of Gouranga. The Lord Gouranga, by the bye, himself has expressly told his followers that the Subornobaniks are the Vaisyas. The Vaisyas of India all over are either Vaisnavas or Jains. Certainly all these go to prove that Vaisyas as a class are all simple, honourable and godfearing men, for even God like persons or Incarnations of God whatever you may choose to call them liked their company and associated with them. It reminds one of the popular saying tell me what company you keep and I will tell you who you are. But we see the words of Milton are but too true :—

truth shall retire

Bestruck with slanderous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found : so shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign.

And it has been the case with the Subornobaniks. They are however by a strange irony of fate now held impure. The cause is however not far to seek. We said at the outset that it is money which is the root of all evil. It is this which has been the cause of their degradation and it is this that has made them an eyesore to all other castes and they justly or unjustly, god knows, tried and even now try their level best to crush them to the ground with contempt. The term

Bania which was used formerly for a gentile merchant is now used as a term of contempt. They even go the length of saying that the Subornobaniks are of impure origin. To support their sayings they are sometimes armed with the so called Sastras which are in fact not held in esteem in Hindu society and try their best to make allusions to the one Puran and the other a Sanghita—the Brahmbaibarta Puran and the Vyas Sanghita. But if these allusions and references do any good, or serve any good purpose they only show their malevolence towards the subornobaniks, for truth to tell, no name of the Subornobániks is mentioned in the above Purans nor is there even any remotest allusion. It is written in the Brahmbaibarta Purana that some one Banik was *fallen* by the curse of a Brahmin on account of being implicated in the stealth of gold and of having associated with a goldsmith. In the other Purana it is written that Banika, Kayat, etc., are of low origin. In the foregoing pages we have amply shown that the authentic writers such as Valmiki, Vyasa, and lexicons as Amarsing and others all testify that Banik is Vaisya, then how can one be justified in placing confidence in these two conflicting assertions. These cannot but be interpolations and perhaps to please Ballal or his descendants. Moreover the feelings of the Brahmins towards the Baniks were quite far from happy as we have seen

before. It was through their prayer that the Baniks were deprived of their sacred thread and the Brahmins play not an unimportant part in the Hindu society. Such a hostile feeling did not exist in Bengal only but we find it in other provinces too (see appendix F). God knows who the fallen Banik is, but the foes of the Subornobaniks say that the fallen Banik is Subarnobanik and also say in the same breath that the Subornobaniks are of low origin as if a low caste could ever be fallen. How they can reasonably refer to these quotations as pointing to the Subornobaniks when there is not the remotest chance of reference or mention to the Subornobaniks in those passages. Suppose, even for argument's sake, that such was the case, is it possible then that such contradictory writings can be the production of the pen of the wisest sages of Hindu Mythology? Said we not at the very outset that the name of Subornobanik is never to be found in any of the recorded Hindu Sastras and those in which such a name is to be found, must be of a later date and full of interpolations which are not rare in the Hindu Sastras? Parasara Sanhita and Brihat Dharma Purana are of such character. For the name Subornobanik was conferred on the Vaisyas of Bengal by Adisur in the eleventh century and that was not the date when Hindu Sastras were made. What to talk of such sages as made

the Sastras there were no good Brahmans competent to perform Hindu ceremonies as we have seen before. In Brihat Dharma Purana the name of Chaitanya is found which fully proves that it was written after the time of Chaitanya and whoever that writer may be, he is not a man of any note and his words cannot consequently be of any value or worth. Parasara Sanhita is, we find from Sabda Kalpadruma, the work of one Vargabram about whom the same thing as above can be very well said. Not only this but it is full of such matters as are fully contradictory to the text of other authentic Sastras, the *Ashtadas Maha Puran* of the Hindus. The like opinion received the sanction of a very great savant, Pandit Bharat Chandra Siromoni, *who for a very long time occupied the chair of Professor of Smriti (Hindu Law) at the Calcutta Sanskrit College, who for many years had been the "Judge Pandit" or Court Pundit under the late Supreme Court under Government previous to his appointment as professor in the said College, and who during his long connection with the Sanskrit College, was required by the highest court in the country to expound different questions of Hindu Law and usage whenever, as it often happened, expositions of the same were needed at his hands. This highly famous

* See Appendix D.

Pundit in the edition of *Manu Sahita* (The Institutes of Manu) compiled under his management of 1866 has recorded it as his deliberate opinion, arrived at after a careful consideration of the *pros* and *cons* of the question in Chapter VII, verses 127 and 130, page 378 and in Chapter X, verse 120, pages 648 and 649 of the book, that "in this part of the country (meaning Bengal) the Suvarnabaniks are the Vaisyas of ancient India." This opinion, we submit, not only remains unchallenged up to this date but what is more, is reiterated at pages 458 and 783 and at pages 378 and 648 of Pandits Mathuranath Tarkaratna and Jogendra Nath Vidyaratna's editions of *Manu Sanhita* (the Institutes of Manu) published respectively in 1876 and 1886. That Pandit Bharat Chandra is an honored name amongst the Hindu pandits is beyond question and doubt. This is not a solitary example where it is said that the Subornobaniks are the true Vaisyas but the Reverend Dr. K. M Banerji, L. L. D.* gave his views in a public meeting which are entirely at one with those of the learned and famous Pandit. The late Roy Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Bahadoor, C. I. E., the genius of Bengal, has done the same thing.†

* See Appendix C.

† See Appendix E.

Hunter says:—"Thus the Vaisya caste literally the *vis* or general body of the Aryan settlers were in ancient times the tillers of soil. They have abandoned this laborious occupation to the Sudra and mixed castes and are now the merchants and bankers of India. Fair in complexion, writes the most accurate of recent students of caste, with rather delicate features and a certain refinement depicted on their countenances, sharp of eye, intelligent of face and polite of bearing, the Vaisyas must have radically changed since the days when their forefathers delved, sowed and reaped. Indeed so great is the change that a heated controversy is going on in Hindu society as to whether the Bengali Banyas or merchant bankers are really of Vaisya descent or of a higher origin."

When the Government of India, at the suggestion of the Asiatic Society consented to call upon its officers in all parts of India to submit lists of the races and tribes found in the various districts Sir George (then Mr. Justice) Campbell, with a view to assist the collation of such data drew up a capital general account of the Ethnology of India and in it we find:—

"THE BUNNEAHS, BANIAN, BANEES OR WAN-EES.—No race is more important in India than the Banees. What I have described the Khatrees to be in a mercantile point of view in the Punjab, that

the Banees are in the whole of Hindoostan and Western India. No village can get on without them. Unlike the Khatrees, they are for the most part confined to their proper mercantile business. A few of them found in Government offices and such service, more properly the domain of the Kaists, but these are only rare exceptions. They have also under our system acquired by purchase large rights in the land, and take farms of more, but this is in fact with them a mere mercantile operation; they do not cultivate the land, but make the most of the rents payable by the ryots, and the ejected proprietors reproachfully term the British Government 'Bunneah ka Raj' or the shopkeepers' rule. Bunneahs may cultivate a few fields, like any one else, or even reduced individuals may earn their livelihood as ryots or labourers, but so far as I know, a proper Bunneah village is nowhere to be found."

"There is no doubt that in their own way the Banees are a people of wonderful energy and enterprise, and it is their energy that gives tone and sinew in a commercial, and to a great degree an industrial sense, to the greater part of India. Without the Banee to supply the sinews of war, little would be done. Their function permeates every operation of every village. In all the great cities of Hindustan, they are found in a position commanding much respect as Bankers and Mer-

chants, and they are also most daring speculators, as is well known in the markets of Bombay and Calcutta. Indeed they often carry the rage for speculation to the point of gambling. In respect of physical courage, however, the case is quite different. Both their habits and their religious ideas make the use of a sword a thing unknown to them, and they have no affectation of personal manliness."

* * * * *

"Possessed as they are of so much capital and energy, there can be no doubt that, from an industrial point of view, the acquisition by them, from indolent and unprovident proprietors, of a good deal of the land is beneficial, when it becomes their absolute property. They, almost alone among superior landholders, perform something of the industrial functions of landlords, and they know too well the value of ryots, altogether to expend and sell up those in whom they have a permanent interest."

* * * * *

"In the Bengal districts though a good many Banee colonists are settled in towns and considerable places, the money-lending and shopkeeping business seems to be in great part in the hands of a variety of other classes."

* * * * *

“The Banees are, I think, really the most sincerely religious among the Hindus, and much attached to their tenets.”

Dalton in his *Ethnology of Bengal* says :—

“The Agarwallas, Oswals and some Banyas are of Vaisya class but they are for the most part foreigners in Bengal” and such foreigners were the Subornobaniks of Bengal.

In Walter Hamilton's *East India Gazetteer* we find :—“The men of opulence now in Bengal are the Hindoo merchants bankers and banyans of Calcutta with a few at the principal provincial stations.”

Moreover the very eminent pandits or oriental scholars of Bengal gave good grounds purely on Shastric points of view and indued with sanctity of reason for their assertion that the Subarnobaniks are the true Vaisyas of Bengal (See Appendix B). In the face of these opinions of such distinguished men as above and the clear facts and figures, one cannot but be convinced that the Subornobaniks are no other than the true Vaisyas. Proofs beyond the range of all criticism are the characteristic traits of the class. Observed we not that the characteristic traits of a Vaisya were independence, benevolence and commercial enterprise and such characteristics are

not hard to be found amongst the Subornobaniks of Bengal? Perhaps it will not be going beyond the pale of truth if we say no caste in Bengal could excel them in these respects.

The good will and benevolence of the late Maharajah Bahadur Sukmoy, Rajah Bahadurs Baidya Nath, Nursing, and Rajendra Mullick, Babus Noyan Chand, Nemy Churn and Nilmoney Mullicks, Mutty Lal Seal and Sagore Dutt and Maharajah Doorga Charan Law and such others are prominently before us. (See Appendix A). Their independence comes in the forefront of public notice even in matters of charity, *i. e.*, they lent their helping hands in the cause of charity but they tried their best to carry out any such laudable object themselves individually than to hang on others to enlist their sympathy. As to their trading faculties they had once the monopoly of banianship* of foreign mercantile houses of Bengal before the Marwaris came to Calcutta and they have even now their own mercantile firms too.† Circumstances led them to give up trade and become bankers and banians and the following lines will fully illustrate the fact.

* "There were some fifty or sixty small and great houses out of which Mutty Lal was Banian to some twenty first class firms, Bissumbhur Sen to nearly as many, Madan Addy to some four or five and Madhava Dutt the same. The few American firms were in the hands of Aushutosh Dey and Brother, sons of Ram Dulal Sircar, of Radhakrista Mittra, and of Halladbur Bose. Mutty Lal Seal was by far more enterprising and richer than any of them."

† Messrs. Pran Kissen Law & Co., Bisso Nath Law & Co., and S. C. Chunder & Co., &c.

“The natives of this country, it is well known, are still diffident of us; and although they have no public banks of their own, nor any secure means of placing their money to interest they are still cautious of trusting it with us. For this reason, trade appears the only mode by which monied men can live, without breaking in upon the principal of their fortunes; but the trade in opium, saltpetre, in the manufacture and wholesale of salt and in cloths (to a great degree) is monopolised by the Company. They consequently have very little choice, and they are obliged to employ their money in the purchase of grain and the other necessities of life and in changing the different coins. It might be expected from their number that all the good effects of competition, in lowering the price of the articles in the market, would necessarily be felt; but this is not the case. They are too prudent to ruin each other by endeavouring to undersell. They must all have their profits, and from the drawbacks they suffer, these must be immense. The trade, therefore, is burdened by the number—is absolutely weighed down. The necessities of life come to the market at a most unreasonable price; they control the specie undisturbed; and have lately shown to the world a feat almost incredible—they reduced the standard value of the current gold coin ten per cent, and were very near being the death

of all trade and credit".—*Kaye's Life and Correspondence of Henry St George Tucker, Chairman of the East India Company.*

"The measures which were taken to check illicit gains appear to have compelled some of the servants of the Company to draw bills on their friends at home. When news of this reached the Directors, they were greatly distressed, for they suspected that such as had not these resources were getting into debt to their native Banyans, and thus rendering themselves 'liable to be tempted to infidelity in the offices they were trusted with.' But instead of deducing from these things the inference that these servants should have better pay, they still clung to the old idea of excessive extravagance of the writers, and again strenuously insisted on the necessity of sumptuary regulations. It was imperatively enjoined that no writer should keep a palanquin unless 'absolutely necessary for the preservation of health;' that no writer should keep 'more than one servant besides a cook;' that no writer should be permitted to keep a horse without the express permission of the Governor; and that no writer should be permitted, either by himself or jointly with others, to keep a country house. 'With respect to table liquors,' they added, 'we cannot pretend to form regulations for them,' nor 'with respect to general extravagance in dress, of

which sad accounts had reached home but the Governor was to keep a watchful eye upon them, and to see that they conformed to that system of economy which had been so often prescribed."—*Kaye's Lives of Indian Officers.*

The greatest ignominy a Subornobanik feels when he has to depend on others and he justly prefers death to this and he is also seldom idle. The characteristic of a Vaisya and a Subornobanik are perfectly alike. It is proved therefore that the Subornobaniks are the true Vaisyas. It is the cruel hand of a tyrant, the introducer of the pernicious system of Kulinism, which tried to hurl headlong down the Subornobaniks, the true Vaisyas, into the depths of misery and ignominy, and others seeing the lion in a ditch or a trap did the usual thing, *i. e.*, raised a note of obloquy. The features and complexion, the habits and tendencies and the intelligence of the Subornobaniks coupled with the name itself lead one to conclude that they are of Vaisya origin. Tempest may blow, ocean may turn and mountains may fall but truth will stand unshaken forever. "The name of a country may be obliterated from a map, the deeds of heroes be effaced from the annals of the world : the pursuit of truth can only cease when man is no more ; its light may be veiled by ignorance, craft, or cupidity *but it cannot be extinguished.*" That the Suborno-

baniks are the true Vaisyas will live for ages for it has truth on its side.

“ O how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give ? ”

Shakespeare.

APPENDIX A.

“ A record of good work done is a better argument in behalf of the Suboranbains than the theories of caste. Theories, at the best, strike the understanding, good work impresses the heart. To move the heart, that is hard and hardened, you should address the heart and not the head.”

Lakshmikant Dhar.—When the English left Hugly to avoid the persecutions of the Mahomedans and settled further down the river in three of the most marshy and malarious villages that ever stood on the banks of the Ganges—a few native bankers shared their ill fortune and followed them to these marshes knowing full well with their usual shrewdness that trade and prosperity would flourish wherever the English would go. Amongst those bankers—all of them being Subarna Baniks, who came and settled in Calcutta, Nakur Dhar—*alias* Lakshmikant Dhar,—was the richest and the biggest. As Jagat Set was to the Nawab of Murshidabad, so Nakur Dhar was to the English, when Clive was equipping his army to avenge the massacre of the Black Hole and if possible to found an English empire in the East. When England was a year's journey off from India and money was scarce amongst the English traders, it was the native banker, Nakur Dhar, who financed

him willingly and ungrudgingly and helped him in various other ways to bring about the downfall of Serajuddowla. During the Marhatta War, again, did Nakur Dhar come forward with an offer to help the Hon'ble East India Company with pecuniary aid. Nakur Dhar was most unassuming in his habit and did not seek any title or honor. Whatever service he rendered to his Government he did so out of genuine feelings of loyalty. He was such a helpful hand to the East India Company that he would have secured any title for the mere asking of it, for he was on very best terms with Clive and Hastings. The East India Company however offered him a Maharajaship but he did not like to take it for himself and proposed his grandson's name for the honor. It is not the pecuniary help only that the East India Company sought for him—but they also used to ask him for good and trustworthy men. It is said that Nakur Dhar introduced (Maharajah) Nubo Kissen to Warren Hastings as his tutor.

Maharajah Sukmoy.—Lakshmikant had no son, and therefore bequeathed his princely fortune to his daughter's only surviving son Maharajah Sukmoy Roy Bahadur, who was distinguished at that time not only for his loyalty but for his many works of public utility as well. His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Delhi, in appreciation of

the loyal feelings and philanthropy of Maharajah Sukmoy Roy Bahadur conferred on him the title of Maharajah and gave him permission "to command over four thousand men and use a Palkie with fringes around it" in the fortieth year of His Majesty's reign. (See Schedule A). Amongst many works of public utility which Maharajah Sukmoy Roy did, the Cuttuck road, which he built at an immense cost and for the repairs of which he deposited Rs. 1,50,000 with the Government, will keep his name ever engraven on the hearts of his country men. In recognition of this service he received the title of "Maharajah Bahadur" and a medal from the British Government during the administration of the Marquis of Hastings, and obtained some hereditary concessions for making pilgrimage to the Temple of Jagannath. (See Schedule B). The documents published in Schedule C will show with what honor and pomp Maharajah Sukmoy Bahadur used to travel at that time. So great was his prestige and respectability that the Government was always anxious to offer him every comfort whenever he went on pilgrimage. This is clearly proved by the passport granted him by the Government and published in the Schedule C. His reputation for philanthropy was not confined to his own country only. It travelled beyond it, so much so that His Majesty

the Shah of Persia sent him a Perwana through the Board of Council confirming on him the title granted by the Emperor of Delhi. He was the only Bengali Director of the Bank of Bengal when it was established

Maharajah Sukmoy left five sons, namely, Rajahs Ramchandra Rai Bahadur, Krishna Chandra Rai Bahadur, Baidya Nath Rai Bahadur, Shib Chandra Rai Bahadur, and Nursing Chandra Rai Bahadur. Almost all of them had nobly trod in the footsteps of their worthy father.

Maharaja Ram Chandra Rai Bahadur—the eldest son of Maharajah Sukmoy Rai received the title of Maharajah and Bahadur from the Emperor of Delhi (see Schedule C 1). He constructed Dum Dum Road and other works of public utility. Lord Amherst granted him a passport on his pilgrimage to Gya and other places (see Schedule C 2).

Rajah Baidya Nath Rai Bahadur—merited the favours of Government by his loyalty and munificence and was invested with the title of Raja Bahadur by Lord Amherst who gave him the privilege of wearing his father's Medal and Sword on all public occasions. He contributed Rs. 50,000 to the Hindu College; Rs. 40,000 towards the erection of the Kasipur Gun Foundry Ghat and

the road leading from it to Dum Dum ; Rs. 30,000 to the Native Hospitals* ; Rs. 20,000 in aid of the funds for Native Female Education projected by the late well known Miss Wilson ; Rs. 8,000 towards the construction of the Karmanasha Bridge ; Rs. 6,000 to the Zoological Society of London for which he was honored with a highly complimentary note from the Most Noble the Marquis of Lansdowne, accompanied with a Diploma of the London Zoological Society (see Schedule C 3).

Rajah Nursing Chandra—contributed Rs. 19,978 for the construction of a bridge as per Schedule D and Rs. 20,000 to the Native Hospital as per Schedule E. There was hardly any useful institution at that time to which he did not subscribe liberally. In recognition of his large charities and loyalty Lord Amherst conferred on him the title of Rajah Bahadur and granted him permission to use a carriage drawn by four horses as per Schedule F. The Government also honoured him with the permission to attend the Viceroy's Durbars and Levees (see Schedule G). The privilege of going to the Temple of Juggannath in his an-

* In the Report of the Mayo Native Hospital for the year 1890 it is stated thus :—" Lord Amherst on being applied to, made a private donation of Rs. 1,000 and his Lordships example was followed by a large proportion of the European Community, but only three Native gentlemen on this occasion came forward, these however, were distinguished exceptions :—Rajah Buddinath Roy having subscribed sicca Rs. 30,000, Rajah Shib Chundra Roy Rs. 10,000, Rajah Nursing Chundra Roy Rs. 10,000. And these three gentlemen were the first natives who were elected Governors."

cestral style was also granted to him which the copy of the passport as per Schedule H will show. He was also allowed to retain three armed followers a privilege granted to very few dignitaries at that time. (see Schedule I.) So great was his popularity that he was always received with the highest honour at every state function. He was very fond of Bul Bul fight with which the rich Baboos of that time used to amuse themselves. He was a great lover of flowers and plants.

Schedule A.

*Mahammud Tawazzan Shah Mirza Khurranbukht
Bahadur (may his prosperity last forever
O ! God.)*

In accordance with an august order passed on Sunday the twenty-seventh of Jamadiyussani in the fortieth year of His Majesty's reign corresponding with the month of Azam ninth solar month by His Highness the protector of people, of holy titles, illustrious and powerful prince, best plant in the garden of royalty, choice fruit of the tree of sovereignty, fruitful plant of the orchard of pomp and grandeur, verdant flower of the garden of everlasting fortune, shining star of the heaven of greatness and glory, precious pearl of the sea of fortune and prosperity, first foremost hair on the forehead of religion and fortune, lustre of eyes

of country and religion, approved in the sight of the Almighty Creator, included in the favors of Solomon-like powerful Emperor, splendour of the glorious and successful lamp of the magnificent royal house, alighting place of the favors of God, rising place of the light of the imperial clemency, cause of agreement of the great sovereignty, His Majesty's truly august son, planter of the flags of victory and conquest, opener of the doors of equity and justice, helper of the various fields of victory, assistant of the crusaders of the war of sovereignty, shining moon of the sky of grandeur, chosen one amongst the princes of high dignity, importer of glory to sword and pen and noble in nature, ever felicitous and master and prince of the world and its inhabitants, it is again submitted for His Majesty's perusal and is written by (Hafiz Abdul Ghan) the writer of events and least of the house-born slaves in His Majesty's Court that an order has been issued to the effect that Raja Sookmoy Roy be promoted to the title of Maharaja Bahadur and the post of the *Char Hazaree* (command over four thousand men) and be permitted to use a Palki with fringes arround it and that his son Ram Chandra be promoted to the title of Raja and the post of *Do Hazari* (command over two thousand men). Date mentioned above in the fortieth year of His Majesty's reign.

Endorsed by His Highness the Prince of the world and its inhabitants. Let it be recorded in the annals.

Grant him a Sanad dated with the month mentioned above in the fortieth year of His Majesty's reign corresponding with the year 1212 Hijree.

<p>Seal of Khuram Bukht Muazam Shaha Bahadur in the year 35 of His Majesty's reign, son of Jehandur Shah Bahadur heir apparent of Emperor Shaha Alam Guzi in the year 1207 Hijree.</p>
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Schedule B.

Request on the part of Maharajah Sookmoy and the Governor-General's Replies.

REQUESTS.

1st—When either I or my son or descendants shall go to Jaggannath, we and our followers should be exempted from the payment of the Tax.

2nd—When my Gomasthas and people carry articles for the Bhoje of Jaggannath they may be allowed to pass without paying the Tax.

3rd—When I go to the temple I shall be allowed to take the Pareechah stick in my hand and that in my absence my Naib may be allowed to have the stick.

4th—That my name may be inscribed in the Sanskrit, Persian and Bengali languages on the Bridges.

5th—That with respect to the above articles the Rajah of Khoordah may not be allowed to interfere or have any control.

6th—That at different places clumps of trees shall be planted.

7th—That at Begonia a tank shall be dug and that another tank shall be dug at any other place where water may be wanting.

8th—That if the above be approved of a sanad shall be granted to me and that the order be published at Pooree.

ANSWERS.

1st—The Governor General in Council will give the necessary orders for exempting the Maharajah and his family and his and their personal attendants from the payment of the tax established on pilgrims at Jaggannath.

2nd—No tax shall be levied on the Maharajah's Gomasthas or people on this occasion.

3rd—The request shall be complied with to the fullest extent which may be consistent with the institutions of the Temple of Jaggannath.

4th—The Maharajah's name shall be inscribed on the bridges as requested and the Governor-General in Council will likewise adopt such further

measures as shall appear best calculated to transmit the Maharajah's name to posterity as the liberal promoter of so useful and magnificent an undertaking.

5th—This request like the third shall be complied with to the fullest extent which may be consistent with the institutions of the Temple.

6th—This request shall be carried into effect.

7th—This request shall be carried into effect.

8th—That Maharajah will consider this paper under the seal and signature of the Governor-General to be a Sanad. The necessary orders also shall be published at Pooree.

True copy

20th December 1810. (Sd.) GEO. STEVENTON.

Granted by Lord Minto with Seal and Signature.
The original of this order is written in Persian.

Schedule C.

Translation of a free passport granted by the Government to Maharajah Sookmoy Roy Bahadur.

Be it known to all the Collectors of duties, Watchmen, Guards and Keepers of the public roads that whereas at present the Hon'ble Maharajah Sukmōy Roy Bahadur is going from Calcutta to Cuttuck for the purpose of making a pilgrimage to

the temple of Jaggannath and has with him the undermentioned articles and servants, it is necessary that none of you should prevent him on account of levying duties of the road, &c., but you should let him pass with safety and protection from the respective boundaries of your jurisdiction. You should consider this order urgent.

List of Articles and Servants.

Silver Plates	...	...	...	1 item
Clothes and vessles of brass &c. in	...	...	...	40 boxes
Tent	...	...	...	1 item
Jhalurdar Palkies with venetian blinds	...	...	...	15
Camel	...	...	...	1
Carriages	...	...	...	2
Horses	...	...	...	illegible
Boxes containing spice, &c.	...	...	...	4
Bedsteads	...	...	...	2
Boxes of goods and ornaments	...	...	...	4
Burkundazes with Jamadars	...	...	...	15
Lance bearers	...	...	...	4
Man bearers	...	...	...	7
Torch bearers	...	...	...	7
Munshi	...	...	...	1
Clerks	...	...	...	2
Barbers	...	...	...	4
Hurkuras	...	...	...	4
Sweeper	...	...	...	1

Sepoy ...	...	...	...	2
Jamadar	...	...	...

(Sd.) WELLESLEY.

Dated 20th February 1805.

Translation of a passport granted by the Commissioner of Orissa to Maharajah Sukmoy Roy Bahadur.

Dated 20th March 1805.

To

THE WATCHMEN, GUARDS, COLLECTORS OF
DUTIES ON THE ROADS AND PASSES IN THE
PROVINCE OF ORISSA.

Know you all whereas Maharajah Sookmoy Roy Bahadur, after performing pilgrimage, is going back from Cuttuck to his native land Calcutta, it is ordered to you that wherever he should alight you should remain present to watch and guard him, should let him pass safe and protected from your respective boundaries and each of you should supply him with a guide to take care of and show the road to him. Considering this matter to be urgent you should act in accordance with what has been written above.

(Sd.) J. MELVILLE,
Commissioner.

Schedule C-1.

In the name of High and Holy God.

From

HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR ABENUSSER
MAMADIN MAHMOOD AKBARSHA GHAZEE.

In these happy days a magnificent order deserving obedience and submission has been passed by us to the effect that whereas in consequence of our complete favour and abundant graces, which are samples of the graces of God, we having bestowed on our devoted and willing servant Ram Chandra who deserved our favour and kindness the titles of Maharajah and Bahadur and the post of a personal command over four thousand and four thousand horsemen and having granted him the permission of using a Palkie with fringes around it have exalted and distinguished him among our nobles and statesmen and among his equals and contemporaries, it is necessary that our renowned, successful and high born children, highly influential ministers, all the statesmen of our court and the Governors of our Provinces, considering our abovementioned devoted servant to have been exalted and honored by us with these approval and chosen titles and posts, should understand that day after day our look of favour will be increased to unlimited extent

on the happy condition of the abovementioned Bahadoor.

Dated 19th Jamadiyusani in the sixth year of His Majesty's Reign 1227 Hijree (corresponding with A. D. 1811.)

Seal of the Emperor Abunessur Mamadin Mahmood Akbarsha Ghazi son of the Emperor Shah Allum in the year 1221 Hijree.

Schedule C-2.

A copy of translation of a passport (written in Persian) granted by Government to Maharajah Ram Chunder Roy Bahadur on the occasion of his going to Gya and other places of pilgrimage. Dated 22nd October 1824.

To

ALL THE COLLECTORS OF DUTIES, GUARDS,
WATCHMEN AND KELPERS OF THE ROADS
AND PASSES FROM THE PORT OF BALASORE TO THE RIVER SURVARNAREKHA.

Be it known to you all that whereas Maharajah Ram Chunder Roy Bahadur, eldest son of the late Maharajah Sookmoy Roy Bahadur is at present going from Calcutta upto Allahabad for the purpose of making a change of climate and performing his father's

funeral obsequies at Gya and other places of pilgrimage, he has with him articles, Sepoys and Burkundazes as detailed below. It is necessary that none of you should hinder or deter him on the roads and passages for the purpose of levying from him prohibited taxes, but you should protect, guard and let him pass through your respective boundaries. He should, however, pay without excuse the taxes fixed and made current by the laws and regulations of the Government to Officers appointed in that department. Considering this matter to be very urgent you should act as it has been stated above.

Details of the Articles, &c.

Armed Sepoys and Burkundazes	...	24
Silver plates	...	1 item.
Wearing apparels such as Doshalas		
and Roomals	...	1 item.

Dated 28th Safar 1240 Hijree,
Corresponding with the 22nd October 1824.

(Sd.) AMHERST,
Governor General.

Seal of the Government
of India.

Schedule C-3.*To*

RAJA BUDY NATH ROY BAHADUR,
THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,

under the Presidentship of

THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE,
and the Vice-Presidentship of

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF SOMERSET,

RIGHT HONORABLE LORD AUCKLAND,

„ „ EARL OF DARNLEY,

„ „ LORD STANLEY, M. P.,

„ „ EARL OF EGREMONT,

CHARLES BARING WALL, Esq., M. P.,

have received with great gratification, through Major General Thomas Hardwicke, formerly Commandant of the Hon'ble the East India Company's Bengal Artillery, the communication of your wish that yourself and your son should be admitted as members of the society, and having been at the same time informed of your munificent contribution to zoological science by the maintenance of a large menagerie, to which the most liberal access is afforded,

Having noticed also with admiration and respect other evidences of your enlightened public spirit, evinced by the donation of twenty thousand

rupees to the cause of General and Female Education in India,

And being apprised of the distinguished honor done to your name in common with the names of four of your distinguished brothers, by the Honourable John Adam, late Governor General of British India, on the construction of a Ghat and Military road to the Cantonments of the Honourable Company's Artillery at Dum-Dum, impressed with sentiments of more than common respect for your character by this series of benefactions, the Zoological Society recognise with pleasure, your desire to be associated with the Scientific Institutions of Great Britain, and hereby admitted you and your son Cowar Roy Rajkissen to be Original Members of the Zoological Society of London. In record whereof this Diploma is ordered to be presented to you in your own name and in that of your son, Cowar Roy Rajkissen.

LANSDOWNE,

President.

22nd January 1826.

AUCKLAND,

Vice-President.

N. A. PIGARS,

Secretary.

Schedule D.

Translation of an Urdu Letter from the Superintendent of Bengal Roads to the address of Rajah Nursing Chundra Roy.

Dated 15th March 1842.

(AFTER THE USUAL COMPLIMENTS.)

In compliance with an order stated in a letter from His Excellency the Governor General of India, I beg to ask you whereas in the year 1826, you and your brother Rajah Shib Chandra Roy have deposited near Mr. Secretary Culpeb (?) a sum of Rs. 10,000 (ten thousand) for the purpose of repairing the bridge in the road over the River Karmanasa and paying the salary of its keepers, etc., from the interest of the said sum and whereas nothing was spent out of it even after the year 1830, therefore the said sum amounting to Rs. 16,700 (sixteen thousand seven hundred) including both principal and interest, is lying in the Treasury of the Honourable East India Company. In the place of the bridge on the road a stone bridge has been erected by Rajah Patunimal at his own expense. Government however, has spent Rs. 19,978-0-5 (nineteen thousand nine hundred and seventy-eight rupees and five pies) for the repairs of the said bridge. If you like to apply the

abovementioned deposited amount in the repairs of the said stone bridge, *viz.*, if you like to pay it as a part of the expenditure of Rs. 19,978-0-5 incurred by Government then an account of the generosity of you two brothers being engraved on a piece of marble may be fixed on the wall of the bridge, or else should you like to have a new bridge erected, then an iron bridge may be constructed over another river on the public road leading from Calcutta to Benares so that your name may be renowned, and I hope that after paying consideration to the two matters mentioned above you will be good enough to state quickly in reply what is agreeable to you so that I may acquaint the Military Board and Government with it.

(Signature Illegible),

Dated 15th March 1842. Supdt. B. & B. Roads.

No. 161.

BURDWAN AND BENERAS ROADS OFFICE,

Dated 22nd July 1842.

To

RAJAH NURSING CHUNDER ROY,

Calcutta.

SIR,

I beg to annex a copy of a letter No. 1086 of the 21st June received from the Secretary to the

Military Board with reference thereto, and may I request the favor of your informing me, at your convenience, whether it would meet with approbation to lay out the money in question (Rs. 16,700) in constructing a new bridge, so that the entire credit may rest with yourself.

In your last communication you stated that you do not wish to advance any further sum of money—but you need experience no anxiety on this point, as out of the number of bridges about to be constructed on the new road, one could be selected, the outlay in which would closely approximate with the cash now at disposal.

On completion of the bridge, a Tablet can be fixed in the parapet, having a suitable inscription to commemorate your liberality.

In the event of your approving of the foregoing proposal, I can hereafter acquaint you with the name of the river to be bridged over and forward a copy of the design for the bridge.

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Sd.) C. A. P. ALCOCK, *Captain,*

Superintendent Roads.

No. 1086.

To

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF ROADS,

Benares.

SIR,

I am directed by the Military Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 50 of the 30th ultimo, and to observe that as the object of the Karmanasa Bridge the credit of which must now rest with Rajah Putnee Mull, the Board are induced to suppose that there may be some other bridge in this line of road the cost of which would correspond nearly with the sum available and the whole credit of which might, as in the case of the staging Bungalows between Allahabad and Benares, rest entirely with Rajahs Shib Chander Roy and Nursing Chander Roy.

2. If any such arrangement can be suggested by you and should meet with the approval of Rajah Nursing Chander Roy the Board would recommend it for sanction of Government.

3. An early reply is requested.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

FORT WILLIAM,	}	(Sd.) H. D. BUDE,
Mily. Board Office,		<i>Secy., Military Board.</i>
<i>The 21st June 1842.</i>		

Schedule E.

To

RAJAH SHIB CHANDER ROY,
AND
RAJAH NURSING CHANDER ROY } *Bahadurs.*

GENTLEMEN,

The Chief Secretary to Government having communicated to the Governors of the Native Hospital your having presented to that institution donation of twenty thousand sicca rupees, I am directed by the Governors to return you their unanimous and cordial thanks for your munificent donation.

I am further instructed to inform you that the Governors have it in contemplation to bring your donation to the notice of the subscribers at their next general meeting, when no doubt your claims to being elected Governors will be recognised.

I have the honor to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient and humble servant,
(Signature illegible),
Secretary.

NATIVE HOSPITAL, }
21st April 1826. }

Schedule F.

*Translation of a Persian Letter from Lord
Amherst, Governor General of India, to Rajah
Nursing Chandra Rai Bahadur.*

(ON THE ENVELOPE.)

To

*The brave and high in dignity, glorious and
eminent in rank* REVERED RAJAH NURSING
CHANDRA RAI BAHADUR, *may be in peace.*

Dated 19th May 1826,

corresponding with

10th Shawal 1241 Hijree.

THE LETTER :

Brave and high in dignity, glorious and eminent in rank and revered, Peace be to you. On account of your and your ancestor's good will and loyalty proved and verified in regard to this Government, and also for the reason of your being heartily engaged and zealous in diffusing and prosecuting good generous works I promote you to the titles of Rajah and Bahadur and permit you to use for your conveyance a coach drawn by four horses. It is necessary for you that having returned thanks and been grateful for these great favours you should keep yourself more than before engaged and ready in showing your loyalty and good will. What further should I write?

(Sd.) AMHERST.

Schedule G.

To

RAJAH NURSHING CHANDRA RAI BAHADUR.

MY ESTEEMED FRIEND,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge your letter, which was delivered to me on the 11th instant, and in reply, I am directed by the Right Honorable the Governor General to inform you that His Lordship has been pleased to comply with your request to attend the Durbars as heretofore.

I remain,

With much consideration,

Your sincere friend,

(Sd.) W. H. MACNAGHTEN,

FORT WILLIAM,	}	<i>Secy. to Govt.</i>
22nd January 1834.		

Translation of a reply from W. H. Macnaghten, Esq., to a letter from Rajah Nurshing Chandra Rai Bahadur.

Dated 23rd January 1834.

MY DEAR RAJAH SAHEB,

I am glad to receive and understand the contents of your letter dated the 15th instant. Whereas your admission in the Levee of His Excellency the

Governor General has been granted and permitted as usual, I am therefore directed by His Excellency to inform you of this matter. What shall I write further.

(Sd.) W. H. MACNAGHTEN,
Secy. to Government.

Schedule H.

Translation of a passport granted by Government to Rajah Nursing Chander Roy Bahadur on the occasion of his making a pilgrimage to the Temple of Juggannath, dated 4th July 1833 A.D., equivalent to 15th Safar 1249 Hijree.

To

ALL COLLECTORS OF DUTIES, GUARDS,
 WATCHMEN, AND KEEPERS OF ROADS
 AND PASSES.

Know you all that whereas Rajah Nursing Chander Roy Bahadur is going by land from Calcutta for the purpose of making a pilgrimage at Juggunnath he has with him the articles and people as detailed below. Consequently I am directed by His Excellency the Governor General to inform you that none of you should deter his progress on the roads and passages on account of levying from him improper taxes,

but you should protect, guard and let him pass through your respective boundaries. He should however pay without excuse the taxes fixed and put in force by the laws and regulations of the Government, with officers appointed to collect them. Considering this matter to be very urgent you should act in accordance with what has been written above.

List of Articles and People.

Elephants	...	...	2
Horses	...	...	10
Garries	...	...	10
Palkies	...	...	16
Woolen, gold embroidered and wearing cloths	...	...	1 item.
Gold and Silver Plates	...	...	1 „
Goods and Carpets &c	...	...	1 „
Armed men for watching and guard- ing	...	...	100

Dated 4th July 1833 A.D.,

equivalent to

15th Safur 1249 Hijree.

Seal of the Govt.
of India.

(Sd.) W. H. MACNAGHTEN,
Secretary to the Government.

Schedule I.

To

RAJA RAM CHANDRA RAI,
 „ KRISHNA CHANDRA RAI,
 „ BAIDYA NATH RAI,
 „ SHEEB CHANDRA RAI, AND
 • „ NURSING CHANDRA RAI.

I am directed by the Magistrate to transmit the enclosed extract of a letter from Mr. Chief Secretary Bayley, for your information.

CALCUTTA POLICE OFFICE, } (Sd.) THOS. CYEN,
The 1st April 1823. } *Clerk.*

*Extract of a letter from Mr. Chief Secretary
 Bayley, dated the 20th March 1823,*

Para. 2nd—The Governor General in Council has been pleased to resolve that Rajah Ram Chunder Rai be allowed to retain four armed attendants and that Rajahs Krishna Chunder Rai Baidya Nath Rai, Sheeb Chunder Rai and Nursing Chunder Rai be allowed to retain each 3 armed followers.

Para. 4th—The name, caste and description of each of the individuals whom they may respectively propose to retain as their armed attendants must be registered at the Police Office and similar information must be regularly communicated with regard to any individuals whom they may hereafter wish to substitute in lieu of those ordinarily entertained.

THE MULLICKS OF CALCUTTA.*

Banamali Mullick—had an Abad Kancharāpara in the District of Nuddea, adjoining to which he excavated a canal which is still known as the Mullicks' Canal. He founded an *Atithasala* or guest house in the District of Nuddea.

Kristo Dass Mullick—built a temple at Ballavpore near the banks of the river Hughli and an Alms House in Tribeni.

Rai Hari Ram Mullick, Rai Rayan, (i. e.)—the then agent to the Hon'ble East India Company, Dacca.

Darpa Naraian Mullick—was celebrated for his practical charity and religion which he evinced by the establishment of several Alms Houses and temples at Benares and in the districts of Nuddea and Hugli.

Nayan Chand Mullick—built many temples and Dharamsalas at Mahesh near Serampur. Benares and other places, excavated many tanks in different parts of Bengal and constructed a pucca road in Bara Bazar, Calcutta, which he made over to the Hon'ble the East India Company for the public use.

* This old and respectable family of Subarnabanik originally bore the name of "Dey" but the hereditary title of Mullick was conferred on them by the Mahommadan Government. Mullick in Persian means a king, an Amir or nobleman. This title of honor was given to noblemen by the Mahommadan kings.—*Vide Gayah Sul Logat and Taj ul Logat.*

Nimai Charan Mullick—built a temple at Ballavpur, and took part with his brother in the erection of an edifice at Kancharapara for Krishnaroyji and left a sufficient fund in the late Supreme Court for the support of these religious institutions. He performed several religious acts, such as *Chaitanya-Mangal Gan*, *Parayan*, *Tulat*, &c., at an enormous cost by distributing on each occasion pearls and golden necklaces, silver plates, and other valuable articles to Brahmins, Goswamies, &c., and feeding a large number of beggars who received small amount of cash besides clothes. His generosity, indeed, was manifested most strikingly in liberating all civil prisoners for debts who happened to be in jail under judgments of the Small Cause Court on the occasion of his *pala*, or term of *Sri Sri Singhabahini Pujas*.

He left three lacs of rupees for religious purposes. It was the way in which a Hindu of old did public good. No one left so large a sum in cash as Nimai Charan Mullick, who principally made his money by trade and by the *Sat-Challisa* loan during the first Mysore War, when for every 60 rupees lent to Government they granted a paper for Rs. 100.

What a part Babu Nimai Charan Mullick played then in advancing loan to the Government may well be understood in the following lines :—

"The natives* of this country," wrote Mr. Tucker, in 1789 "are still diffident of us; and although they have no public banks of their own, nor any secure means of placing their money to interest they are still cautious of trusting it with us."

"To the eye of the unreflecting multitude it appears that great battles are fought only by means of swords and muskets, guns, howitzers and mortars; and so long as we have men amongst us able to direct the movements of these swords, muskets, guns, howitzers and mortars, great wars can be carried on and great victories can be gained. But the statesman knows that there is a mightier instrument still than any one of these things—an instrument without which all these are nothing, the ever potential money bag. He knows that the commander of armies is paralysed if the commander of the money bags does not come to his aid. He knows that to the success of a campaign financial skill is not less necessary than military skill, and that if the soldier is to triumph, the financier must be found, at the right time, equal to the occasion. Perhaps it is less difficult to find soldiers than to find financiers; but the

* It will give some idea of how British tenure of India was valued by the Rajah of Burdwan in 1826 or towards the conclusion of the First Burmese War, if we remark that at this time Lord Amherst (Governor General) asked the Rajah for a loan of a certain sum of money, promising to repay it at the end of twenty-five years. The Rajah declined saying he did not know whether twenty five years hence the East India Company would possess the country!—*W. F. B. Laurie's Distinguished Anglo-Indians (second series)*.

first are sure of popular applause whilst none take heed of the poor wise man who saves the city. Our Indian Empire has more than once tottered on the brink of ruin—not because swords or bayonets have wanted temper, or guns and howitzers the true metal, but because the money bags have been emptied by exhausting wars, and it has been far more difficult to replenish them than to sweep great armies from the field.”

“ Lord Wellesley—he was then known as Lord Mornington—had halted on his way to the seat of the Supreme Government, for a few days at Madras ; and there he had learnt that the state of affairs in Mysore called immediately for a hostile demonstration against Tippoo Sultan on the part of the British Indian Government. Imperfectly acquainted with the condition of the Coast Army and the state of the Public Treasury, the young Governor General had scarcely taken the oaths of office when he sent down instructions to the Madras Authorities to prepare immediately a Military force to march into the heart of the Mysore dominions. Such a mandate as this burst like a loaded shell on the floor of the Madras Council Chamber. Mr. Webbe, whom many years afterwards the Duke of Wellington, who knew him well, described as ‘one of the ablest and honestest of men,’ was then Chief Secretary, and the main spring of the

Coast Government. Lord Mornington's orders filled him with astonishment and dismay. 'I can anticipate,' he exclaimed, 'nothing but a return of shocking disasters from a premature attack upon Tippoo in our present disabled condition, and the impeachment of Lord Mornington for his temerity.' He knew that the army was dispersed, that the muniments of war were unprepared, and that the Treasury was well nigh empty.† And knowing this he was right. In less emphatic language, General Harris, the Commander-in-Chief, urged the same arguments, whilst, as a soldier, he declared his willingness to obey orders. But the Governor General had not been many weeks in Calcutta before he recognised the great truth, that soldiers cannot make war without financiers to help them; so the first orders were countermanded, and it was determined to 'take time.'—*Kaye's Life and Correspondence of Henry St. George Tucker, Chairman of the East India Company.*

There is a Dharamsala in Brindabun consecrated in the name of Nemy Churn Mullick where the poor and destitute pilgrims find shelter.

There are large sums of money in the hands of the Accountant General, High Court, the interests

† The debt at this time (1798) was seven millions and a half sterling. The deficit for the financial year 1797-98 was about thirty-three lakhs. —*Tucker's Review of Indian Finance.*

of which are enjoyed by the *Shebayets* of the deities at Mahesh, Bullovpore and Kanchrapara.

Babu Nimai Charan had eight sons. Almost all of them were equally famous like him. The marriage of his grandson and sradh ceremony of his wife were performed with such great *eclat* that they have passed into proverbs. On the occasion of the celebrated Ram Rutton Mullick's son's marriage the Chitpore Road for two miles was sprinkled with the best rose water and sightseers paid Rs. 30 to 40 terrace hire for witnessing the procession. The following is the description* of an eyewitness of the most magnificent *Sradh*.

"Each of the eight sons got up a silver *Dan Sagar*. They also distributed eight lacs of rupees to the poor. One Brahman who had a hand in the distribution coolly appropriated a cart-load of silver to himself. This was the *Sradh* that gave currency to the saying *Chotta and Burra Kangali bidaya*. It arose thus : There was a house with a large compound in the north-eastern quarter of the town. Though payment was going on from morning to dewy eve the Kangalis shewed no diminution in number. Coming to know that they were being privily let in again through a back door, proper guard was taken and a *de novo* payment was made. A few surplus bags remained

* National Magazine January 1897. "Old Leaves Turned Back,"

after distribution, and their contents were scattered broadcast on the compound for the *Burra Kangalis*."

On the occasion of the Durga puja ceremony of the family goddess Sri Sri Singhabahini Jiu they released all debtors incarcerated in jail in execution of Small Cause Court decrees. They acted as arbitrators and settled disputes in a manner which pleased all the parties concerned. The eldest son Ram Gopal Mullick was the President of the *Dharma Sabha* held at the premises of Bhabani Churn Bannerjee of Soorti Bagan. The second Ram Rutton Mullick carried on salt monopoly and other speculations. The East India Company, it is said, owed him a very large sum of money on account of salt. The fifth Ram Mohun Mullick was a very religious and obliging man who carried out the religious trusts of his father's will which made him famous. The recital of *Astadash Maha Puran* continued for three months and on which occasion he fed a large number of men and distributed at the same time clothes, shawls, pearl necklaces, silver dishes, &c., to the Brahmins and Goswamis. He caused a bathing ghat to be built at an enormous cost after his father's name. It was the way in which a Hindu of old did public good.

Mati Lall Mullick—the eighth son of Nimai

Churn spent large sums of money in the recital of the *Purans* and in establishing family deities Sri Sri Radha Shamsoondar Jiu. He had an extensive banking business. He, in fact, was a friend in need and a friend indeed. He was very popular. Almost every month he used to invite his friends and kinsmen to witness *Jatra*, *Mohutsub*, *Nautches* &c., in celebration of the periodical worship of his newly established deities. The widow of Mati Lall Mullick built a *Kunjabati* at Mahesh and at Brindabun where a certain number of poor people receive *prosad* or food daily. Nor is this all. She endowed sufficient funds to feed the poor irrespective of caste and creed every year during the *Rath Jatra* festival continually on eight days. She built a *Rash Mancha* at Ballavpur. She spent large sums of money on pilgrimages to Benares, Gya, Puri, Hardwar, Muttra. Brindabun, &c., in company with her friends, kinsmen and dependents. Her private charities were immense. Intellegent as she was, she followed the footsteps of her departed husband and became extremely popular.

Fadu Lall Mullick—the son of Mutty Lal Mullick, regularly performed several religious rites like his father. In 1878 he performed the *Tula* and *Parayan* of his mother at a large expense. As a public man he showed unyielding energy, and a living

example of freedom and independence of thought and action. He was an Honorary Magistrate and Justice of the Peace of Calcutta and the 24-Perganas and a Vice-President of the British Indian Association and was known to many as an educated and intelligent nobleman of very good character. He took great interest in the cause of science, art and literature. He was a Trustee of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science and of the Hindu Hostel, a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Bengal Social Science Association and also of the District Charitable Society of Bengal,—a nominated Municipal Commissioner of Calcutta and its suburbs, a Visitor of the Presidency Jail, Calcutta, and Dullunda Lunatic Asylum. He was thanked by the Government for the interest he evinced in the welfare and diet of the convicts. He received a Certificate of Honor at the Darbar, held at Calcutta, on the 1st January 1877 on the occasion of the assumption of the title "Empress of India" by Her Most Gracious Majesty the late Queen Victoria in recognition of his services as a Municipal Commissioner and an Honorary Magistrate. He was appointed a member of the Local Committee of the Calcutta International Exhibition 1883-84 also of the Sub-Committee for the purpose of forwarding the objects of the Indo-Colonial Exhibition, London, 1886, as regards Calcutta. He

published a very interesting Pamphlet on Pooree Water Supply Scheme for which he received the thanks of the Government. It was through his indomitable energy and exertions that the Puri Temple was repaired. He on several occasions used to feed and supply clothes to the poor and especially during the great famine of 1866 he fed daily 200 and upwards of famine stricken people for a considerable time. He endowed Rs. 30,000 for the maintenance and education of poor widows and orphans and founded a free department in the Oriental Seminary where poor boys are taught free. In 1869 when the Oriental Seminary was tottering to its foundations. Babu Jadu Lall Mullick saved it from utter ruin by a handsome monthly subscription for years. He was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress* and was ever in the forefront to promote any movement set afoot in the interests of the city or for the welfare of the people. He fought the famous Municipal case at an enormous expense for public good.† His private charities, too, were no less

* To quote the words of Mr. Hume :—"The league of which you are truly one of the creators—but for your support that first day there would have been no league now."

† "There are few things more inspiring than the sight of a man engaged in resisting with all his might an illegal action, or even an action which he sincerely believes to be illegal. It is such examples that contribute more than anything else to the making of great nations and unfortunately they are sadly needed in this country. Baboo Jadu Lall Mullick, therefore, has done a public service for which he deserves a civic crown, in fighting against the Calcutta Corporation a battle in which it might well have

remarkable. He was always mindful of advancing social and educational progress of the country. He always kept up the family prestige by social gatherings at his residence and gardens on several occasions. He had the honour of entertaining Lieutenant Governors, Chief Justices and other high officials as well as respectable merchants and many other people of note of his time to improve the feelings between the rulers and the ruled. In addition to his other accomplishments he read laws and his advice was eagerly sought by many. On several occasions he acted as an arbitrator or referee to make up others differences. Taking in his hand the management of a few estates he set the houses in such order that they are flourishing now in conspicuous prosperity. His acts shew that he was always ready to rescue a weak party from the clutches of his influential kinsmen or neighbors whenever such help was sought. He was a Hindu of Hindus and was highly respected by the Europeans as well as

seemed, and in which, we must confess, it did at one time seem to us, that the chances were heavily against him."—*The Statesman*, 6th June 1892.

"Baboo Jadu Lall Mullick, has rendered service to the whole community and especially to that large portion who have neither the means nor the moral courage to protest thus practically against the irregularities and the highhandedness so severely denounced by Mr. Justice Trevelyan."—*The Indian Daily News*, May 5th 1892.

"The result of this litigation will be highly beneficial to the public. The public good required a great sacrifice and a less eminent citizen could not have served the purpose."—*The Reis and Rayyet*, May 21st 1892.

"Mr. Mullick has rendered a valuable service to the public by having dragged to the light of day this oppressive conduct of the Municipality."—*The Hindu, Madras*.

his own countrymen for his independence of character and honesty of purpose, for his learning and temperate habits. He persuaded all who came in contact with him to do charitable works as is evidenced by the works of Rani Rajkumari Dassi.

Rai Anath Nath Mullick Bahadur—the son of a distinguished father Jodoo Lall Mullick distinguished himself at a very early age for his amiable and charitable dispositions as he closed his career when he was only 28. Within this very short space of time his name was brought to the notice of the Government who were pleased to confer upon him the title of Rai Bahadur as a personal distinction on 21st May 1898.

Shyama Churn Mullick—popularly called the Indian Rothschild was the youngest son of Babu Roop Lall Mullick,* the description of whose house can be read with interest in Heber's journal. He was distinguished for his numerous acts of charity, public spirit, and kind disposition. He was a great lover and patron of fine arts and a very good sport-

No. 7611.

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

* I am directed by the Military Board to request you will lay the annexed copy of an application for arms and accoutrements dated the 31st ultimo, from Roop Lall Mullick before the Right Honourable the Governor General in Council and obtain the orders of His Lordship in Council whether or not the application is to be compiled with.

MILY. BOARD OFFICE,

2nd February 1824.

}

I have &c.,
(Sd.) JOHN CRAIGIE,
Secy., Mily. Board.

man. He liberally encouraged painters and musicians irrespective of caste, creed and colour. He was the first Indian gentleman who took active interest in races and spent large sums of money in its pursuit. So great was his popularity that the people used to muster strong in the streets when he used to go out for a drive. The grand reception of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh was held in his wellknown Villa Seven Tanks and it is worth mentioning that His Royal Highness was quite pleased with the site of the garden and the tanks. He was loved and respected by the Europeans as well as by his own country men.

Rani Rajkumari Dassi—was the widow of the late Prankissen Mullick, the eldest son of Roop Lall. This lady would have been deprived of her vast estate had she not sought the advice and help of Babu Jodoo Lall Mullick. It was Babu Jodoo Lall who persuaded her to do the following charitable acts. She built the Juggunath Ghat, excavated tanks, *Mariband* houses and placed government

No. 8056.

To

BABOO ROOP LALL MULLICK,

SIR,

In reply to your letter of this day's date I am directed by the Military Board to transmit herewith an order to the Principal Commissary of Ordnance to deliver you the arms and accoutrements therein requested.

FORT WILLIAM,
Mily. Board Office ;
The 18th February 1824. }

I am
Your Obdt. Servant,
JOHN CRAIGIE,
Secy. & Acct., Mily. Board.

paper to the extent of 91,000 rupees* in the hands of the Official Trustee for the maintenance and education of poor widows and orphans, for the daily feeding of panpers and distributing clothes in winter &c. For these acts of charity the title of Rani was conferred upon her by the Government as a personal distinction on the occasion of the Jubilee of the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty.

Nilmony Mullick †—built and consecrated the Thakurbati of Jagannathji at Chorebagan, the worship of which he inherited from his maternal uncles. He established an *Atithsala* or Alms house attached to this, where a large number of the poor and helpless of every caste and creed receive daily food. On his pilgrimage to Puri finding a large number of poor families in great distress, from the loss of their homesteads through a conflagration in the neighbourhood of Gourbarshahi and Hara-chandi Shahi Puri, he helped them with money to build their cottages and saved them from the inclemencies of a rainy weather. On another occasion when distress was raging amongst a very large number of poor pilgrims assembled at *Atharanala* or Eighteen Bridges, where a toll used to be levied in those days, he arranged with the local authorities

* Rs. 45,000 for the benefit of widows and orphans Rs. 30,000 for the daily feeding of paupers. Rs. 10,000 for distributing clothes in winter and the remainder for other objects.

† The Patronymic is *Seal*.

for their free ingress and egress by undertaking himself to pay on their behalf. But as the amount he had thus to pay, was considerably much more than he had thought of keeping along with him for his journey, he was forced to ask the Collector to accept a draft for this sum on his brother Babu Boistab Das Mullick of Calcutta. He built a costly *Natmandir* to the temple of Jagannathji at Dauton. He several times procured the release of civil prisoners from jail by paying over the amounts of their debts, before the Act for the relief of insolvent debtors were extended to this country. He had a great taste for music and liberally encouraged the professors of that delightful art. On the occasion of *Sripanchami* every year he held a *Maiphel* in which musicians exhibited their talents and received liberal rewards. He introduced the reformed sytsem of Full Ackrai singing accompanied with musical concerts. His efforts in this direction have been casually mentioned in the life of Ram Nidhi Gupta, generally known as Nidhu Babu, the celebrated professor of music. Such was the renown and fame of Babu Nilmoni Mullick's liberality that the Private Secretary to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal incidentally mentioned in a letter addressed to his son Raja Rajendra Mullick Bahadur, dated the 6th February 1874, about 53 years after his death. "The Lieutenant-Governor

desires me to say, that he is well aware of the good services done by your father in helping the poor and the destitute."

Baistab Das Mullick—rendered assistance to many families of rank, in preserving their zemindaries from being sold for arrears of revenues and settled the family disputes of many, saving them from utter ruin. He munificently provided comfortable habitations for several of his dependants and continued his share of the family charities and of the numerous other good works inaugurated by his ancestors. Some of these charities still continue to be daily administered up to this day in his *Thakurbati* at Darpanarian Tagore's Street and also at Brindabun by his descendants.

Birnursing Mullick—did much good in the circles of private life. His advice and assistance were sought by many and he was always willing to render them assistance with the readiness of a true friend. Taking in his hand the management of a few estates he set the houses in such order that they are flourishing now in conspicuous prosperity. Following the path of his ancestors he helped many zemindars out of pecuniary difficulties, saved them from disastrous family litigations, and continued performing good works of charity and kindness.

Braja Bandhu Mullick—gave up a very valuable piece of land in the vicinity of Clive Street for opening a new street now called Clive Row which greatly improved that locality and he erected several costly buildings on its sides.

Tulsi Das Mullick—was a very able man. When the Government first established the bench of Honorary Magistrate in Calcutta he was one of those, first appointed. The opening of the east end of Darpa Narain Tagore's Street and its connection with Ratan Sirkar's Garden Street were effected mainly through his exertions.

Subal Das Mullick—was a very amiable and polite gentleman and was always ready to befriend people seeking his assistance. He was the first native gentleman to set the example of volunteering Basti improvement in Calcutta. He was an Honorary Magistrate and Justice of the Peace for Calcutta.

Raja Rajendra Mullick Bahadur—Men admire in others the very qualities which they are secretly conscious of not possessing themselves. Raja Bahadur was loved and admired by all, therefore, we are sure to find in him some such traits as are not common. His life however imperfectly be told is full of interest and lesson. Brought up in the lap of luxury he cultivated his head and heart which

stood him in good stead in allaying the distress of the suffering humanity. Dr. Nolan writes:—*

“It has not been easy to obtain much knowledge of the mode in which the banyans and native merchants in Calcutta spend their time when away from general observation. The following account by a gentleman who enjoyed the hospitality of some of them is therefore interesting. Baboo Rajendra Mullick lives the gentleman, and devotes his time to ornamenting his house, by purchasing everything that comes from other parts. The more costly the article, the better is he pleased. Animals and birds filled the garden, and his aviary contained the feathered tribes of every land, from the ostrich to the emu—the mandarin duck of China to the bird of paradise. The late Earl of Derby contributed something to the collection. I saw several goats from Cashmere, the kind from whose wool the celebrated shawls are made. The goats thrive poorly out of the mountains and there were only five left out of some two hundred that the Baboo owned. The Baboo is most gentlemanly in his manners and well informed in ancient and modern history, speaking English with remarkable fluency.”

Of his acts of charity the following will fully illustrate the trend of his heart.

* Dr. R. H. Nolan's *History of the British Empire in India.* ‡

The Government of India was pleased to notice his acts in the Calcutta Gazette of 23rd January 1867 under the heading of the munificence of Baboo Rajendra Mullick.

From—J. GEOGHEGAN, Esq., Officiating Junior Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

*To—THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, CALCUTTA.
(No. 4465, dated the 7th November 1866).*

I am directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to request that you will be so good as to report in detail the extent of the acts of public beneficence and charity of Baboo Rajendra Lall Mullick.

From—J. S. HOGG, Esq., Commissioner of Police, Calcutta.

To—THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL, POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

No. 1590, dated the 30th November 1866.

(1) In reply to your letter No. 4465 of 7th instant I have the honor to report that Babu Rajendra Mullick is daily in the habit of distributing food to a large number of destitute persons.

(2) • In June last, when the famine-stricken paupers commenced flocking into the streets of Calcutta, Baboo Rajendra Mullick at once organised

arrangements on the most liberal and efficient scale for distributing food to all deserving persons who presented themselves before his house. The example thus set by Baboo Rajendra Mullick was, it is true, quickly followed by many others, but I think it will be admitted that the gentleman who first inaugurated the lavish private relief measures, which existed in Calcutta for several months should be singled out as deserving of special notice.

(3) On the 30th August last the Executive Famine Relief Committee became impressed with the necessity of adopting measures, with a view to clearing Calcutta of the paupers, who were to be found in crowds throughout the northern portion of the town, as it was feared that if this could not be effected, some epidemic might break out. In giving effect to this resolution, the first step was to persuade the managers of numerous charities either to bring their relief measures to a conclusion or else to remove to Chitpore and to work in co-operation with the Relief Committee. With a view to assist the Committee Baboo Rajendra Mullick immediately came forward and agreed to cease distributing food to the famine-stricken paupers within the town, and in lieu thereof to place Rs. 100 per day at the disposal of the Committee for the purpose of feeding one thousand paupers at Chitpore.

(4) By the support thus afforded by the Baboo the Committee were enabled to carry out their object without causing much dissatisfaction amongst the native community. Had the Baboos not come forward, I doubt much, whether it would have been successful in effectually removing the paupers from the streets of Calcutta.

(5) When hospital accommodation was required by the Committee Babu Rajendra Mullick placed at their disposal several valuable godowns in Colootolla, only just built and valued at a monthly rental of Rs. 1,600 and also the premisses and land lately known as the Tivoli gardens. The godowns the Committee did not avail themselves of, as they are situated in a too crowded part of the town but the latter premisses are still in possession of the Committee and are used as a foundling asylum.

(6) As there is no doubt, that when all the relief operations in Calcutta are closed, the Committee will have some 300 orphans on their hands, Baboo Rajendra Mullick has generously promised to guarantee in perpetuity a monthly subscription of Rs. 100 in aid of any foundling asylum established.

(7) It will thus be observed that Baboo Rajendra Mullick has throughout that crisis nobly exerted himself to relieve the distress, and has done all in his power to assist the Committee, and it affords me much pleasure to bear testimony to the services he

has rendered and to commend the Baboo to the special notice of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor.
From

THE HONORABLE A. EDEN, SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVT. OF INDIA,
HOME DEPARTMENT.

(No. 4889, dated the 11th December 1866.)

I am directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to submit for the consideration and orders of the Right Honorable the Governor General in Council, copy of a letter from the Commissioner of Police of Calcutta (No. 590, dated the 30th November 1866) commending to the special notice of the Government the conduct and services of Baboo Rajendra Lall Mullick in relieving the distress, lately prevailing in Calcutta and in supporting the sufferers, who have resorted to the city, from the famine-stricken districts.

(2) The Lieutenant-Governor has received Mr. Hogg's account of this eminent native gentleman's voluntary exertions and sacrifices in the cause of humanity with the liveliest satisfaction and feeling confident that such conduct will be highly appreciated by His Excellency in Council, desires me to recommend Baboo Rajendra Lall Mullick

for some special mark of His Excellency's favour as a suitable acknowledgment of his enlightened and munificent charity.

From

THE OFFICIATING UNDER SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, FOREIGN
DEPARTMENT.

To

THE OFFICIATING JUNIOR SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

(No. 10, dated the 3rd January 1867.)

Your letter No. 4889 dated 11th December to the address of the Secretary in the Home Department, having been laid before the Governor General in Council His Excellency has been pleased to confer upon Baboo Rajendra Lall Mullick the title of Rai Bahadur in recognition of the munificence he has displayed in the relief of the sufferers from the late famine.

(2) I am directed to forward the accompanying sanand for transmission to that gentleman Honorable A Eden, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, through the Commissioner Sir Steuart Hogg requested, that the thanks of the Government may be conveyed to each of the members of the Executive Committee of the Bengal and Orissa Famine Relief

Fund and specially to Baboo Rajendra Mullick for the timely adoption of measures for the relief of the poor of Calcutta and its vicinity as per copy of a letter No. 3413, dated 28th December 1866 forwarded to him.

His benevolence, public spirit and high character attracted the notice of the Government and other public bodies here as well as in Europe. Honours were thrust upon him. On the 4th July 1857 the Zoological Society of London presented him with a silver medal for the first introduction into England Himalayan pheasants and on the 21st May 1863 he was elected a corresponding member of that society. The same year the Acclimatization Society of Melbourne elected him an Honorary Member of the Society in acknowledgment of the many services rendered by him to the cause of the acclimatization. The President of the Royal Geological Society of Antwerp requested him to keep relation with the Society to make exchange of birds and animals. He presented many rare and valuable birds and animals to other societies in England for which he several times received the thanks of His Excellency the Viceroy. In 1869 he was elected a Trustee of the Indian Museum and its member of the Finance and Library Committee in 1875. He was one of those through whose exertion and

liberality contributed in a great measure the establishment of the Calcutta Zoological Garden. The authorities for his eminent services at the time of its opening named the first house after him the "Mullick's House." During the Proclamation of Her Majesty the Queen Victoria in January 1st 1877 he received a certificate of Honor from the Government in recognition of his charity and liberality. Again in 1878 in recognition of his high character and benevolence he received the title of 'Raja Bahadur' as a personal distinction. He was appointed a member of the Calcutta International Exhibition in 1883-84.

His daily feeding of the paupers of Calcutta, his benevolence and public spirit and last though not the least his high character secured for him a name second to none in the metropolis of the British India. He was an ideal landlord. He preferred to forego his claim to suing a tenant for the realisation of rent. For this he suffered immense loss but which he cared not. He was a prince in behaviour as well as in mode of living. His house with all its rare and valuable furniture and works of art is worth a visit.

The late Dr. Rajah Rajendra Lala Mittra Bahadur, LL.D., C.I.E., as President of the British Indian Association noticed the death of the most revered gentleman in the following terms;—

“ A more accomplished and finished gentleman than him you could not get in all Calcutta (hear, hear & cheers). His liberality was princely and in losing him the citizens of Calcutta have lost an accomplished gentleman and most benevolent worthy member of society (hear, hear) and the poor of Calcutta have lost a father (cheers). You must all remember, that during the famine of 1865-66, he fed more than 5,000 paupers daily, and for months. He contributed Rs. 40,000 for the support of such orphans, as fell in the hands of the Famine Committee and as such gave food and alms to more than a thousand persons daily at his house from year's end to year's end for many years together. This is a prediction, which I am afraid, I cannot assign to many persons in Calcutta, and it would be no exaggeration to say that he was in our community a Peabody. He left a worthy heir in Kumar Debendra Mullick.

Kumar Debendra Mullick—The *Indian Mirror* noticed the death of the Kumar in graphic manner touching all points of interest in his life.

“ A scion of the great Mullick family has just passed away. It is with the sincerest grief that we have to record the death of Kumar Debendra Mullick of Chore Bagan in Calcutta. We notice the passing away of the Kumar, with all the greater sorrow because he was one of the very few Hindus,

remaining, who led truly blameless lives in accordance with the injunctions of the Shastras. The late Kumar Debendra Mullick, indeed, came of a lineage, remarkable for diligent exercise of genuine Hindu virtues. There is an authentic story, related of the late Kumar Debendra Mullick's grandfather, which effectually illustrates the overpowering passion of this family for doing good. It is said that Babu Nilmony Mullick and his wife were about to sit down to their morning meal, when a stranger, famished and hungry, entered their dwelling and demanded their hospitality. There was no other cooked food in the home, but the breakfast that was ready was at once given up to the stranger. This noble character was handed down by Babu Nilmony Mullick to his son Raja Rajendra Mullick and by the latter again to his son the late Kumar Debendra Mullick. Indeed we know it for certain that the late lamented Kumar never sat down to his breakfast, before feeding a large number of the poor. Though belonging to an older generation, he was an educated man, but he was altogether free from presumption and vanity, which are noticeable among so many of the educated men of the day. He was humility itself. Friends and strangers were alike charmed with his manners, which were the perfection of unaffected courtesy. To know him was a pleasure, to talk to him a valued privilege.

And in addition to the charm of outward manner and talk, the late Kumar Debendra Mullick possessed a heart richer than gold. He was all sympathy and charity. He not only fed the poor, but any one who sought his assistance came the richer for his thoughtful bounty. Of course his deeds were not blazoned forth in the press, for the late Kumar was possessed of exceeding modesty and his left hand was not permitted to know what his right hand gave. There was not a tinge of self-consciousness in him. All his thoughts and efforts were for others. But though he discarded all ostentations and lacked every feeling of selfishness, he did not confine himself to his house or worked in a narrow circle only. He was a master spirit in the British Indian Association and so long as health permitted him he took a prominent part in every public movement. He was in full sympathy also with the aspirations of the people. We have said that the late Kumar Debendra Mullick was an educated man, but he was also a man of considerable taste and culture. We believe he cultivated the art of painting* and understood the art of sculpture. His palatial house at Chore Bagan is stocked with pictures and works of art in marble and is one of the sights of Calcutta. Possessed of so many virtues

* The admirable oil-painting of Her Majesty at the time of her coronation, with the imprint diadem on her head, which adorns a room in the place, is wholly and entirely an execution of the Kumar.

as the late Kumar Debendra Mullick was, it is not necessary to descant on each of them separately. He was an honor of Subarnabanik caste and would have been equally an honor to the Brahmin caste as well. Indeed the late Kumar was an honor to the whole Hindu Community to which his example of plain living, high thinking and deeds of constant beneficence and charity ought to serve as one, all worth of imitation. Though he was by caste Subarnabanik the late Kumar Debendra Mullick was better and nobler by far than most Brahmins of this degenerate period. It is melancholy to think that such a man should have received no tokens of honorable recognition from his Government. Titles and honors are showered upon unworthy persons but seldom upon deserving men. The case of the late Raja Rajendra Mullick was an exception. But in our day we have seen at least two men dying without being honored with a title by Government, though the public unanimously thought they deserved the distinction. We are speaking of the late Mr. Manickjee Rustomjee and the late Kumar Debendra Mullick. Neither of them was a flunkey nor touted for a title and their memory will remain all the greener for their self-effacement.

Kumar Manindra Mullick—the youngest son of the late Raja Rajendra Mullick Bahadur maintains the high position and good name of his father by

his very many good qualities which he possesses. He has the advantages of birth, wealth and education on his side. What is better still, he seems to be possessed of the healthy and laudable ambition to serve the public. The Government in recognition of his public charties conferred on him a Certificate of Honor on the 20th June 1897.

MUTTY LALL SEAL.

Beginning life as a bottle and cork dealer, Mutty Lall closed his run of luck with a colossal fortune out-topping the fortunes of all his contemporaries. There were some fifty or sixty small and great houses, out of which Mutty Lall was banian to some twenty first class firms. He was by far more enterprising and richer than any of them. On giving up banianship, Mutty Lall Seal turned a great landed property speculator. His friend Ramtanu Seal of Bow Bazar was in the Sheriff's office. In the sales there of properties involved in litigation, few ventured to bid, or go to law against him. So he became the first land holder of his day with a monthly rent of Rs. 30,000. He turned also a merchant successively in partnership with Fergusson Brothers & Co., Oswald Seal & Co., and Tulloh & Co. In these three firms he was said to have lost some thirty lacs of rupees.

Mutty Lall Seal got up some 200 cargo boats, then a new speculation in the market. He worked the old Flour Mills, and shipped whole cargoes of biscuits to Australia for the first emigrants to its newly discovered gold fields. Latterly he put up a mill to refine sugar on the centrifugal principle.

Owing to several conversions the Hindu community became very much alarmed. They took place among the boys of the missionary schools which gave a free education. So all the big Babus of Calcutta entered upon an anti-missionary movement to have a free national school of their own. One afternoon they assembled in a grand crowded meeting at the premises of the Oriental Seminary, presided over by Raja Radha Kanta Deb. Many were the speeches made and many were the resolutions adopted. At last the subscription book was laid before the meeting. Down came the temperature of the spirit of the Babus from the boiling point to near the freezing mark. The book passed from hand to hand of one magnate and another, who all felt indecisive as to belling the cat, or first of all putting down the amount suiting his purse, prestige and the object. In due course it came to Mutty Lall Seal, who at once put down his name for a lac of rupees. Astounded and dumb founded by his munificence, those whose calculations had been a few hundreds or thousands made haste to

close the proceedings, and the meeting broke up in a fiasco.

Pledged to his subscription Mutty Lall Seal carried out the promise of a national institution by his own independent efforts. On Wednesday the 1st March 1843, a very numerous and highly respectable gathering of European and Indian gentlemen including some ladies, took place at his house for the purpose of formally opening the Seal's Free College. Among those present were the Chief Justice Sir Lawrence Peel, Sir John Peter Grant, the principal members of the Calcutta Bar, Right Reverend Dr. Carew, Babu Dwarka Nath Tagore, the Revd. K. M. Banarjee, Babu Shama Churn Sircar, Mr. George Thompson and others. There were many eloquent speeches in testimony to the noble generosity and equal liberality of mind of the Founder of Seal's Free College. Mr. George Thompson complimenting him as "a Hindu gentleman, who had nobly resolved to consecrate a large portion of the substances he had acquired by honorable exertion, to the intellectual improvement of the youth of his own nation to transmute his money into mind."

He was highly distinguished for his piety and unlimited charity. He established an ~~Alms House~~ in Belgharia in 1841, which is even now open to the poor. He gave away an extensive tract of land

without compensation to Government for the erection of the Fever Hospital at Calcutta, and for which a ward in the Hospital was dedicated to his memory and named Mutty Lall Seal's ward

He did not put himself before the public eye by any speechifying or writing or by taking a part in the public questions of his day but by his purse. He was a practical public man, who knew no humbug or shamming, no finesse or flunkeyism. Simply moved by nature, his *pro bono publico*, manifested by his Seal's Free College and Belgharia Atithsala—by many other instances of benevolence indeed and which, was the outburst of a pure, noble and disinterested patriotism. In him we must recognise a large hearted pioneer in movements calculated to tend towards the betterment of his fellows. But the point of view from which "none but himself could be his parallel," was his manliness to the backbone. He was most remarkable as a man of *never give up*—who held his resolutions in a veritable vice. There he was not a Bengali but a downright John Bull moving spirit." His second son Babu Chuni Lall Seal made by will a munificent bequest of Rs. 50,000 to the Fever Hospital.

BISSUMBHUR SEN*

This man began his career upon 8 or 10 rupees

* In noticing a certain house and grounds at Rishra Mr Marshman remarks— "They belong now to the family of Bissumbhur Sen, who affords

a month and before his death had created a large fortune of some two hundred thousand pounds, out of nothing, by dint of economy, skill and perseverance.

He was banian to some 20 first class English firms. He was the first banian to Messrs. Gillanders Arbuthnot & Co., which was under the style of Messrs. Gillanders Ogilvie & Co. Many interesting and witty conversation in the forms of explanations used to pass between Bissumbhur and the members of the firm as will be found by the following account :—

One morning a great row was made by Mr. Anderson owing to short weight of linseed, a shipment of which was made to Liverpool. Advices received that morning announced the fact that several tons of linseed were short received by Messrs. Earles & King, Liverpool.

The weighing sircars, the godown sircars and others were all requisitioned to give explanation. No one could say a word except Bissumbhur—the Banian—who comes to office at noon. When Bissumbhur entered office all the office ran to him to say that Mr. Anderson was very much annoyed at short weight of linseed and that they could not offer any explanation.

an example of the large fortunes which the vast traffic of the country and especially of Calcutta, combined with the confidence our institutions inspire, enables natives to accumulate in the space of a single life."

Bissumbhur laughed and said—You can't explain this simple matter? He went to Mr. Anderson and salaamed him. Mr. Anderson told Bissumbhur that so many tons were found short at Liverpool.

Bissumbhur said :—

Master take a piece of paper and write:—From dealers godown to my godown, my godown to your godown, your godown to Custom House, Custom House to Ghat, and Ghat to ship. Count, if little little fall how much go.

Mr. Anderson laughed and the matter ended there.

On another occasion a great havoc was made by some rats on some bales of broad cloth stocked in the office godowns which were all cut through involving a loss of about Rs. 20,000. Bissumbhur was called to explain the carelessness of the godown people. Bissumbhur explained thus :—

Master ! how can you put blame on me ? Your house mouse cut, not my mouse. I not bring mouse from my house—your godown, your mouse. I not responsible. And after a good deal and hearty laugh the matter dropped.

He was very kind and religious. Many, who served under him, became rich. He built several *maths** at Panihati, Navadwip, Bagnaparah and Agarparah.

MAHARAJAH DURGA CHURN LAW, C. I. E.

He is the senior partner of the firm of Messrs. Pran Kissen Law & Company and a zemindar, a Justice of Peace and Honorary Presidency Magistrate, and the first native member of the Port Commissioner. He was a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council 1874, a member of the Senate of the Calcutta University, elected a Governor of Mayo Hospital, 11th April 1878, a Member of the Imperial Legislative Council 1882, a Commissioner for the reduction of Public Debt, February 1882, Sheriff 1882, made a Companion of the Indian Empire, 24th May 1884; President of the British Indian Association in 1885 and 1888; (the title of Raja was conferred in 1887) again appointed a member of the Imperial Legislative Council 1888 (the title of Maharajah was conferred in 1891) and exempted from personal attendance in Civil Courts, 27th January 1892. He has founded several scholarships in the Presidency College by a princely gift of Rs. 50,000 to the Calcutta University and contributed Rs. 5,000 to the Mayo Hospital, Rs. 24,000 to the District Charitable Society and Subarabanik Charitable Society. On the occasion of the investiture of the title of Raja Sir Steuart Bayley the then Lieutenant-Governor, addressed him thus :—" I welcome you here to-day with great pleasure as one with whom my acquaint-

tance dates back a quarter of a century. Whether as a leading representative of the native mercantile community, as a member of the Legislative Council, as Sheriff of Calcutta or as a trusted adviser of Government and exponent of the feelings of your countrymen, you have always had the esteem and respect of all classes. In all these capacities you have rendered valuable service to your country and to the Government, service which was recognised three years ago by the bestowal on you of the companionship of the order of the Indian Empire and which is now in the year of Her Majesty's Jubilee further rewarded by the title of Rajah which the Viceroy has been pleased to confer on you."

SHYAMA CHURN LAW

The younger brother of Maharajah Doorga Churn Law was an energetic partner of the firm of Messrs. Pran Kissen Law & Co. and a zeminder. He, in order to advance business of the firm, visited England in 1869, and in fact this visit stood him in good stead. His keen intelligence and business capacity were always remarkable. He was a Director of the Darjeeling-Himalyan Railway, Member of the Consultative Committee of the East Indian Railway formed during the Strachy Administration, Commissioner of the

Subarban Municipality, Honorary Magistrate of Calcutta and the Twenty-four Pergunnahs, and Member of District Board. His heart was equally great. He founded an Eye-Infirmiry by a princely donation of Rs. 60,000 whose foundation stone was laid by the Marchioness of Lansdowne.

GOUR MOHUN ADDY

Was the pioneer of education and in the true sense of the word a patriot. More than half a century ago there were very few schools in Calcutta except the Hindu College and the Calcutta Society's School. The general public could neither send their boys to the Hindu College as the schooling fee was high nor would they like to place their boys to the Missionary Institutions lest they should embrace Christianity as often had been the case in those days. The promotion of education was at a stand still. This struck Gour Mohan. Born as he was of humble parentage scarcely could he think of removing this want had he not been prompted and urged by sheer patriotism. He had received no instruction at any public school. He was wholly self-taught. By his indefatigable industry, steady perseverance and sterling abilities he carried out the noble resolution of founding an institution where the rich and the poor could alike receive education. The Oriental Seminary was

such an institution and Gour Mohun was the Founder of it in 1829. It is the *Alma Mater* of such men as the late Hon'ble Justice Sumbhoo Nath Pandit and Kristo Dass Paul, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee and eminent and distinguished writers the late Dr. Sumbhoo Chunder Mookerjee, Akshay Kumar Dutt and many more too numerous to mention. The independence of this Seminary was a distinction of which the founder had good reasons to be proud as its existence was dependent on no local government aid. It received the patronage of such high officials as the Governor Generals, Chief Justices and Puisne Judges. They evinced a deep interest in its welfare by examining its classes, distributing prizes and encouraging the boys by presenting them with medals. The Seminary's fame travelled as far as England, its name was honourably mentioned in the Celebrated Despatch of 1854. His private life was as pure as his public life was useful.

SAGORE DUTT

A self-made man endowed the sum of Rs. 13,00,000 for charitable purposes which are in the hands of the Administrator General of Bengal.

APPENDIX B.

Vyavastha Patra, or recorded opinion (that the Subarnabaniks are Vaisyas) of five of the most eminent Pandits of Bengal.

Question.—To which of the four colours, namely, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra do the Subarnabaniks belong?

Answer.—They are undoubtedly Vaisyas. The word Banik is synonymous with Vaisya. The word Subarnabanik is a compound word and not a technical term. This is plain from the meaning of the constituent parts. The word Subarnabanik means traders in gold, *i. e.*, merchants who, to a great extent, deal in gold. This is the meaning derived from the constituent parts. *Subarna* means gold. Banik means a Vaisya. It is a well-known maxim of the Sruti or Veda, that names are derived from particular attributes (*dharma*), and Logic says, one gets a name from his principal occupation. On account of this maxim the name of the Vaisyas following the trade of gold became Subarnabanik.

Gold is a bright metal (*taijas vastu*); therefore Kalidas says,—“Raghu having no Hiranmaya vessels had to present his offerings in an earthen vessel.” The terms Subarna and Hiranya denote one and the same thing. It is well-known to every one that dealing by sale and purchase of gold,

silver, &c, is the occupation of Vaisyas. This has been clearly stated in the texts of great Rishis, such as Manu and others. In support of this, statement a few authoritative texts are quoted,—“ A Brahman reading the *Ramayan* becomes an orator, a Kshatriya a king, a Banik succeeds in his merchandise and a Sudra on hearing it, becomes great.” This is from the Valmiki Ramayana.

“ On his return from his long stay in his uncle's palace, Bharat when entering Ajodhya did neither hear the bustle of the city, nor the chantings of the Vedas. He did not see the dealing of the Baniks in making sales and purchases ” This is from Bhatti Kavya.

The use of the word Banik in the sense of Vaisya in the Ramayana and Bhatti indicates the actual significance of the term Banik. This is an authoritative statement. The criterion for determining the significance of a term, consists in grammar, analogy, dictionary, authoritative statements and usage. For this reason, it is stated in Rajanirghanta, that *Vyāvahartā*, *Vit*, *Vārtik*, *Paṇi*, and *Banik* are the synonyms of Vaisya.

Manu says that for their livelihood Kshatriyas use missiles and weapons and the Vaisyas tend cattle and practise commerce and agriculture. But for acquiring religious merit, both of them have to study, make donations and perform sacrifices. A

Vaisya should know the difference in the prices of gems, pearls, corals, metals, spun-yarn and deliquescent and aromatic articles.

The king is to compell the Baniks to pay duties on the profit of their trades, after taking into consideration the respective prices of the purchase and sale of articles, the distance from which they are brought, the freight of their transport and the cost of their storage and protection.

The king is to accept a fiftieth part on cattle and gold and a sixth, eighth or a twelfth on paddy as his due. He should compel artisans, skilled and unskilled labourers menials servants and Sudras to serve him one day in the month. He is to take from the Vaisyas a duty of an eighth part on paddy and of a twentieth part on money from gold coins to cowry shells. He should never pay any such tax to the menial Sudras, artisans or labourers, but should make them work instead.

In the text of Manu, quoted above, the portion—compelling the Baniks to pay duties,—clearly indicates that the words Vaisya and Banik are synonymous and the result is that the term Subarnabanik means Vaisyas, trading in gold. In no country and in no time there existed a caste called Suvarnavaisya.

In reply to the query what are the rates of "duty" Manu says—"Dhanya, &c." i.e., if a profit is made

in paddy, the king is to take an eighth, as his due. A duty of a twelfth has also been mentioned. In times of distress an eighth part is to be taken and in extreme distress even a fourth part as aforesaid can be levied. Similarly a duty of 20th part on monies from gold coins down to cowries should be levied. In the above text by "Panchasat, &c." a duty of 50th part has also been mentioned, but this 20th part is meant for in times of distress. Similarly it has been said, that Sudras, skilled and unskilled labourers, such as cooks &c., artisans, such as carpenters and others should benefit the king by their labor; even in times of distress the king should not take money as duty from them. Kulluk Bhatta thus explains the text of Manu cited above. Now it is plain that the texts of Manu cited above, all express the same topic." But from this we are not to understand that any caste engaged in trade or merchandize is a Banik. Parasara says that "working for profit, trading in gems, tending cattle, commerce and agriculture are enumerated as the occupations of a Vaisya. Occupations, such as working for profit, &c., peculiar to the Baniks, are all of them occupations of Vaisyas. Working for profit means taking interest, that is to say, usury. The word "gems" means precious stones, pearl, &c. From this it is clear that testing precious stones, pearls, &c., and their

sale and purchase and lending money on interest, are the occupations of Vaisyas. Testing the value of gold and silver and their purchase, &c. is also their duty. The text is to be explained in this way :—In the text of Manu are mentioned metals. From this is to be understood that the word metal includes gold, silver, &c. A Vaisya should know the difference in the value of precious stones, pearls, corals, metals, spun yarn, aromatic herbs and inspissated fluids. In his commentary on this text of Para-sara, Madhavacharyya says the above.

The Banik, who lends money on interest, should make gifts of cloth, cattle, gold, &c. If he is an agriculturist, he should make gifts of eatables, drinkables, conveyances, beddings, seats, &c. . He should pay a duty by a twentieth part of his profits on his ocmmerce and, hundredth part on his cattle, gold, &c. By this the money-lending Banik becomes free from all blame, as also by adoring, Brahmans. There is a text of Brihaspati to this effect, quoted in the Ahnik Tattwa.

In the chapter on the Vaisyas in Amarakosha, written in accordance with the views of Manu and Parasara, the term Banik is used amongst the synonyms of the word *Vaisya*. After this, are recorded various articles of trade of the Baniks, especially, gold, silver, &c. *Baidehaka*, *Sārthavāha*, *Nāigamā*, *Bānija* and *Banik* are stated to be the different

names of a Vaisya. That Sárthaváha is synonymous with a Vaisya, is well-known. It is written in the drama *Mrichchhakatika*, that there was a twice-born Sárthaváha, a poor young man, named Charu Datta in Avantipur. Again *Swarna*, *Suvarna*, *Kanaka*, *Hiranya*, *Hema*, and *Hataka* are synonymous. And *Durvarna*, *Rajata*, *Rupya*, *Kharjura*, and *Sveta* are also spoken of as synonyms in the said *Amarakosha*.

In spite of these authoritative assertions, if there be now seen statements in any historical or other works that the word Subarnabanik does not mean Vaisya but some other particular caste, then the following evidences may be adduced to contradict them.

First—Amara Sinha, the principal of the “Nine Gems” adorning the court of Mahārājādhirāj Vikramāditya, the master of all Shastras, the celebrated amongst all men and the compiler of the grand dictionary is our authority. His work has been accepted as an authority by men like Váchaspati Misra, Hemádri, Sulpáni, Sridhar Svámi, Raghunandan and other Pandits, ancient and modern, to support the authoritative character of their own works; and these again are accepted as authorities by Savants or Pandits. The object of our saying “in any historical or other works” is, that in case Hemadri in his book in enumerating different castes has mentioned Subarnabanik as other than the Vaisyas, then in that case it must be presumed

that he did not consult *Amarkosha*, otherwise he must have recited what was there, and then his recital would have gained confidence of the learned men.

Amara Sinha must have read the twenty-four Sanhitas, the eighteen Puranas and the Upapuranas. Hence in the court of Vikramaditya who was an able critick on those books, none could dare utter any such *dictum*. If in any historical works, however, there be a statement that the term *Suvarnabanik* denotes a caste other than *Vaisya*, then that is no doubt disproved for reasons mentioned above.

Secondly.—If it be supposed that Amara Sinha had not seen any such historical works or having seen such, omitted to discourse on them in his dictionary, the question then arises, and there is a strong reasons for it, why an impartial writer of *Amarakosha* omitted to make mention of them in his work after having seen and read them. Hence there must be strong points in it, into which it becomes the duty of learned men to enquire, as it cannot be said that there is any such *dictum* in any of the Purans. If there be, it then could not be accepted as an authority, for the reason that the authority of *Smriti* is higher than that of the Purans. Vyas, the author of the Purans, has said, the where there is a contradiction between *‘Sruti Smriti* and the Purans, the authority of the first

is to be accepted. Similarly, where there is a difference between the Purans and the Smriti the authority of the latter is to prevail.

Thirdly—If it be supposed that the aforesaid *dictum* is to be found in Manu as also in the Puranas, but for some delicate cause, Amara Sinha having disproved it, did not put it in his own work. Such a supposition should be rejected, because Brihaspati has said that in Manu Sanhita expositions of the Vedas are found and for this reason its authority is the highest. Any other Smriti which contradicts Manu is neither acceptable nor commendable. It is moreover written in the Sruti, that whatever Manu has said is the guide. Therefore the conclusion is, that the word Banik means Vaisya.

Hence it is clear that in countries where there are Subarna and Gandha Baniks, the prefixes are only indicative of their new title. Benares, Allahabad, Mithila, Ayodhya, Mathura, Brindavan, Kányakubja, Dravida, &c., are ancient places. In these places, Rishis and authors of Dharmashastra lived and were born again and again. Here virtuous kings governed their kingdoms according to the tenets of Shastras. Since then the four colours have been dwelling in those places, where the Vaisya's have been known among the people as Baniks. Far from being denominated as different castes

altogether, there is a total absence of the Suvarna and Gandha Vaniks in these places and their names are not even heard of. In Bengal only are found some Vaisyas with the epithet Subarnabanik adjunct to them. Therefore the epithet is a modern one and is not to be found in the old Shastras. A supposition like this is just and proper. Similarly we find new epithets belonging to Brahmans, for example, *Radhi*, *Vaidik*, *Varendra*, &c. Some of these epithets are connected with particular places and things; most of them are related to occupations. These epithets are given to persons, places and things by the people in general. For example, *Patavaya* and *Bangaja Kavasthas*. There is no difference in reality between them. In the same way the Vaisyas of this country (Bengal) have been named Subarnabaniks and Gandhabaniks. The learned cannot draw any other inference other than this. If in Bengal the term Subarnabanik be not a modern name of the Baniks, one could expect to find in the Shastras, Gandhabanik, Subarnabanik, &c. as separate and distinct Sudra castes. A supposition like this would be most strange and surprising.

The four colours (Brahman, Kshatriya &c.,) dwell in the places mentioned above, and it is very wonderful that there is no caste among them known as Gandhabanik or Subarnabanik. Again innumer-

able persons live in Bengal and it does not stand to reason, that there should be among them Brahman, Kshatriya and Sudra but no Vaisya. Consequently the learned should hold it absurd and erroneous to suppose that the Subarnabaniks are a quite distinct caste and are not the Vaisyas. The belief in such a thing as this, would have its origin in error and misconception. In a conclusion like this if there be any *dictum* of Shastras to support it, even that should be rejected. Brihaspati has said, that in the decision of a thing or matter, a person should not be guided by the Shastras only. A man's virtues and merits are destroyed by absurd judgments. Therefore it is evident that the king Vallal Sen, to accomplish a private purpose did, out of spite for some of the wealthy Vaisyas, condemned them by a word of his mouth and has caused them to be reckoned as fallen caste.

What is more strange is this, that the kings of the present age have no power or privilege to confer a benediction or pronounce a curse. Manu has said, that the term of life of mortals, as fixed in the Vedas, the blessings according to works done by men and power according to body recur from Yuga to Yuga. Hence, as related above, it was unauthorized and was against the Shastras to have cursed or pronounced a blessing. Hence to deceive people, *Jātimālās* (treatises on castes) have been compiled.

They are at variance with the true Shastras and have been written in ignorance of the Dharmashastras and practice of men. They were published with the fraudulent object misleading men. It may be easily understood that they were the products of vile imagination.

If any one urges that in the court of Rájá Vallala Sen, there were most erudite Pandits who were occupied with the study of all the Shastras and who could decide most difficult and delicate matters and make the most difficult subjects plain, and that their treatise on castes, written by them in council ought to be accepted by all; he may be asked to name the Pandits of Vallal's court or the Pandit who adorned his sacrificial grounds and who gained victory over all the Pandits of the world in intellectual debate. What were the respective names of those Pandits and their respective works. No person in India has any information on these points. That in the court of Vallala there were no such Pandits like the "Nine Gems" is proved by the conduct of his father. If there were any great Pundits in his kingdom, his father would not have, at so much pain, brought five Pandits from Kanyakubja and settled them in his own dominion. If again the said Brahmans had begotten sons more learned or wiser than their fathers, their names should have been known among

men. The five Kulins, namely, the Mukerjees, the Banerjees, the Chatterjees, the Ghosals and the Gangulys, were only in the Vallala's country and they were the offsprings of the five imported Brahmans. Some hundreds of years (before Vallala's time) there were in the courts of the great Rája Vikramaditya and of Bhojarája, Pandits who were victorious over all the Pandits of the world in intellectual fight. They were Dhanvantari, Kshapanaka, Amara Sinha, Sanku, Vetála Bhatta, Ghatakarpara, Kálidása, Vararuchi and Varáhamihir. The works, and the name and fame of these great men have been known among men up to this time. People read their books even now for increase of knowledge. Besides, it is known to all, that Vaidántiks, Logicians, Paurániks, Astrologers, Poets and Professors of law, acquainted with all the Shastras and possessed of various qualities of mind, used to visit their courts, on being attracted there by the king's charity and power of appreciation of merit. Hence it is clear that in their courts there used to be discourses and discussions on the Shastras and poetry and usages and solutions of riddles and enigmas, &c. When this was the state of things all over India, was it possible at those times that there should be absence of Pandits, that the Shastras should be dishonored or disobeyed and their study neglected?

The Lord Rama Chandra and the Lord Krishna Chandra, the Pandavas, Parikshit, Janmejaya, Vikramaditya and others were most excellent and most virtuous kings, and Manu and other Rishis were the authors of Dharma Shastras. After these, there were Sankaráchárya, Mádhavácháryya, Vijnánesvarácháryya, Madhwácháryya Chudámani, Bhavadeva Bhatta, Mayúra Bhatta, Kullúk Bhatta, Kálidása, Vararuchi, Amara Sinha, Vallabhácháryya and other famous Pandits. Religious treatises on castes and lists of castes, not spoken of by or not known to such Pandits as these and never accepted by them, could not be accredited by good men. They can have no confidence on the treatise on castes prepared by those four or five courtiers of Vallal Sen.

The Shastras observe, that can the defect-sighted discern what is not noticeable by the lily-eyed? The delirious may count the unit as two, but the good will refuse to accept it as correct. The most erudite modern Pandits, Váchaspati Misra, Sulapáni, Raghu nandana Bhattácháryya and others held in great esteem the Court of Bhojaráj as the next best in point of all religious matters after that of Mahárája Vikramáditya and they clearly said that whatever is not to be found or discussed there must be rejected as unauthorised and false, even if it be allèged to be a Purān and Shastra or to be a part of it.

If the Shastra promulgated by Vallala was correct and was on the lines of the original Shastras, how is it that the above-named great Pandits have not spoken of them in their own books? Why is it that society does not act up to it? There appeared in this country Pandit Raghunandana Siromani whose fame is world-wide. He is looked upon as the most paramount authority on Hindu law and rituals. He has included in his book a *dictum* of Kátyáyana the meaning of which is "The king's court should be comprised of some respectable Baniks, belonging to a reputable family, of good character, wealthy, educated, and unenvious."

Admitting the genuineness of *Brihatdharma Purán* and the caste-list of Parasuram, included in *Brahmavaivarta Puran*, we have to decide the caste *status* of the Baniks, as spoken of in the *dicta* of Katyana and other Munis; in other words, it has to be decided, whether the term Banik, in those *dicta*, means the Subarna or the Gandha Banik. But Katyana does not mean by Banik, any distinction between Gandha and Subarnabanik. If the term Banik therein mentioned is understood to mean a caste different from the existing Baniks, it becomes necessary to explain the contradictions which there are between the Purans and other lists of and treatises on castes. Therefore it is proved beyond the shadow even of a doubt, that there is

no caste, called Subarnabanik different from the Vaisyas. Here ends the unanimous consensus of opinion of the learned on the caste-status of the Subarnabaniks.

SRI BHAVA SANKARA SARMÁ, *Vidyaratna*.

„ MADHUSUDANA SARMÁ, *Smritiratna*.*

„ SARVANANDA SARMÁ, *Nyáyábagisa*.

„ CHANDRA MOHANA SARMÁ, *Nyáyálāṅkara*,
of Vikrampur.

„ TARINI PRASADA SARMA, *Tarkabāchaspati*,
of Vikrampur.

*Late Professor of Smriti, Sanskrit College.

APPENDIX. C.

Extract from a Paper on the Origin and Development of Caste read by the Late REV. DR. K. M. BANERJEE, I.I.D., before the Bengal Social Science Association.

The Vaisya is also supposed to be extinct in Bengal. But—*pace* our national prejudice—I must confess that the Baniks appear to me to have all the Sastric characteristics of the Vaisyas, and to be the lawful descendants of that order.

Before the creation of the four orders, the Vaisyas, representing the Vis or the Arian populace had all secular offices as their proper duties. They had charge of pasturage and agriculture and all the arts of life—and, so far as “money” was understood or introduced, they were also Bankers. On the institution of the Sudra caste, the Vaisyas were relieved of all meaner and servile work which required manual labour; and on the multiplication of the mixed classes, they were again relieved of much of the mechanical arts, which were distributed among carpenters, weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, potters, braziers, &c. The Vaisyas then followed the pure occupation of Bankers and Merchants, and began to be called “Baniks,” their occupation being named “banijya” or commerce. They became in fact the commercial class of the

Arian common wealth. And this must have been as early as the days of Valmiki himself. At the end of the first chapter of the Ramayana, the poet says : " A twice-born man (Brahman) reading of the acts of Rama becomes an orator—one of Kshetriya birth, a king—the ' Banik ' (meaning the third order) succeeds in his merchandisc—and the Sudra on hearing them (for he was not allowed to read) becomes great." Here the Vaisya is distinctively called " Banik."

Now there is no other claimant for the third order, especially in Bengal, except those who are in common parlance called Baniks. If they are not allowed their proper position in society as the third order, it can only be attributed to jealousy. Bengali tradition attributes that jealousy to king Ballal Sen. Whatever the cause may be, a critical exposition of the earlier Sastras must convince the impartial inquirer that the Baniks of our day represent the Vaisyas of old, both in name and in occupation.

APPENDIX D.

*Translation of Opinion of MAHAMOHOPADHYA
PUNDIT BHARAT CHUNDER SIROMONY.*

From this it appears that it is the caste occupation of the Vaisyas to trade in gold and other smaller wares and the castes Subarnabaniks and other (Baniks) belong to the category of Vaisyas, especially "Adhya," the appellation of the Vaisyas, is only to be found amongst the Subarnabaniks. In other castes the said appellation "Adhya" does not exist. But in *Brahmabaivarta* and *Brihad-dharma Purans* we find the Subarnabaniks and Gandhabaniks are classed amongst the Sudras. It is very misleading, and again the versions of both the Purans are conflicting as well as quite different to each other, and there we find injustice has been done to *Anulome* (those born of such parents as Brahmin father Kshatriya mother or Kshatriya father Vaisya mother and likewise) and *Bilome* (those born of such parents as Kshatriya father Brahmin mother or Vaisya father Kshatriya mother and likewise)—in one we find the Kayasthas are traduced and in the other the *Vaidyas* are classed amongst the Sudras. Nor is this all. The constructions of these versions are, it appears, of a later date. These can, therefore, never to be accepted as the productions of Maharshi Vyasa Deb. Therefore

it follows that such versions relating to the said castes are the outcome of either error, superstition or malice and are therefore not genuine. In proof of this vide *Sloka* in the printed edition of the Vyasa Sanhita where Banik (or Vaisya) has been included in the same rank with inferior castes *Kirat*, *Kayastha* and *Malukar*.

The lexicography of Amar Sinha and other authentic Sastras and ancient usages can be cited in support of the meaning of the word Vaisya occurring in Manu and in direct opposition to the above got up versions of the said Purans. From ancient works it can even be shewn that the word *Banik* appears, amongst various other appellations, to designate a Vaisya. In this country the appellation in connection with the caste *Subarna* and *Gandha* Baniks can be explained with reference to trade by the particular castes in the respective articles of merchandise, namely, gold (*subarna*) and spices (*gandha*.)

In some works treating as they do of castes in Bengal, five classes of Baniks have been described in which Baniks have been classed under Sudras along with common artisans or handicraftsmen. But in no work of a sage or Rishi have the handicraftsmen or artisans been designated by the term Banik and no other castes except *Vaisyas* have been called by the name of *Banik*.

APPFNDIX E.

*Translation of an Extract from Bibidha Prabandha
by the late RAI BUNKIM CHRNDRA CHATTERJEE
BAHADUR, C. I. E.*

The Aryans in India consist of four Varnas or colours. Wherever the Aryans settled there the four colours remained. But in Bengal there are neither the Kshattriyas nor the Vaisyas. The few Kshattriya houses are to be found here and there. They came in historic time and most of them during the Mohomedan period. One or two royal dynasties in the very olden times might have come but we are not talking of them. We speak of the people in general. As regards the Vaisyas the case is similar. When Murshidabad was the capital of the Mohamedans there came a few Vaisyas to trade and settled. They have families. Similarly a few of them, who live somewhere else, came at a later date. If we call the Subarnabaniks Vaisyas, even then the number is limited. It is in the trading centres that the Subarnabaniks came and settled and therefore there is no course left but to conclude this.

APPENDIX F.

Extract from Memoir of Central India and Malwa, Vol. II, by MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN MALCOLM.

The Soucars, Shroffs, and Bunias in Malwa are either of the Jain or the Vishnu faith, but by far the greater numbers are of the former, and their prevailing influence and wealth attract many converts. Almost all the Vaisya and Sudra agents and servants they employ, if not before Jains, conform to the tenets of that sect. This renders the Jain tribe (always hateful to Brahmins) detested by the priesthood of that order in Central India ; nor can all the favour of Hindu princes protect them from their hostility. Six years ago, the Jains built a handsome temple at Oojein ; a Juttee, or priest of high character, arrived from Guzerat to consecrate it, and to place within the shrine the image of their favourite deity ; but on the morning of the day fixed for this purpose, after the ceremony had commenced and the Jains had filled the temple, expecting the arrival of their idol, a Brahmin appeared conveying an oval stone from the river Sipra, which he proclaimed as an emblem of Mahadeva ; he was joined by a concourse of other Brahmins and Gosseins, who arming themselves with bludgeons and missiles, soon drove the unarmed bankers and

shopkeepers from their temple. The rude symbol of Mahadeva was placed in the niche prepared for the Jain god, amid the shouts of Brahmins and other Hindus, and proclaimed as *the overthrower of Jains, the all-powerful Mahadeva*. The discomfited party appealed to the governor of the city; but the other tribes were too powerful, and dared his interference in a point of this nature. The authority of Dowlut Rao Sindhia, to whom reference was made, was treated with no greater respect; and the fear of seeing Oojein deserted, with the prospect of distress at that city and Gaulior (for in both the Jains stopped all business and shut their shops,) led that prince to use every means to obtain redress for the violent outrage and insult they had suffered. But his threats and application were alike derided, and, fearing to proceed to extremities in a case of religion, he was obliged to rest satisfied with making what amends he could, by remunerating in part the expense which the Jains had incurred; and the latter, alike powerless from their comparative smallness of numbers and peaceable habits, were obliged to content themselves with this imperfect reparation, and to bear the additional mortification of seeing the temple they had erected become (chiefly from the manner in which it had been won) the most popular place of worship in all Oojein.

The Jain and Vishnu sects though they practise different rites and are of different persuasions, being alike of the Vaisya caste, or mercantile Hindus, intermarry. * * * * * This class of useful men was much cherished by the Emperors of Delhi, and above all by the wise and tolerant Akber. Those that were settled in Central India during his reign appear to have enjoyed a full measure of his protection and favours; and they have still in their possession his royal mandate*

* An application was made to me to prevent the slaying of animal during the Puthoosur or twelve days fast which they hold sacred, and the original Firman of Akber (carefully kept by their high priest at Onjeon) was sent for my perusal. The following is a literal translation of this curious document —

“ In the name of God, God is great

I am in of the Emperor Julaldeen Mohamed Akber Shah. Padsha Ghizee

‘ Be it known to the Mootasuddies of Miwa, that it is the whole of our desires consist in the performance of good actions and our virtuous intentions are constantly directed to one object that of delighting and gaining, the hearts of our subjects &c

‘ We on hearing mention made of persons of any religion or faith whatever who pass their lives in sanctity employ their time in spiritual devotion, and are alone intent on the contemplation of the Deity, shut our eyes on the external forms of their worship and considering only the intention of their hearts, we feel a powerful inclination to admit them to our association, from a wish to do what may be acceptable to the Deity. (On this account having heard of the extraordinary holiness and of the severe penances performed by Hithujisoor and his disciples, who reside in Guzerat, and are lately come from thence, we have ordered them to the presence, and they have been ennobled by having permission to kiss the abode of honor

“ After having received their dismissal and leave to proceed to their own country, they made the following request:—That if the king, protector of the poor, would issue orders that during the twelve days of the month Bhodon called Puthoosur (which are held by the Jains to be particularly holy), no cattle should be slaughtered in the cities when their tribe reside they would thereby be exalted in the eyes of the world, the lives of a number of living animals would be spared, and the actions of his Majesty would be acceptable to God; and as the persons who made this request came from a distance, and their wishes were not at variance with the ordinances of our religion, but on the contrary were similar in effect with those good works

directing that, in deference to them, no animal was to be slain in this province during the Putchoossur or twelve days fast. The Soucars have by presents obtained annual orders to the same effect from Mahratta and other rulers; but these have been but imperfectly observed

prescribed by the venerable and holy Mussulman, we consented, and gave orders that, during those twelve days called Putchoossur, no animal should be slaughtered

' The present sunnud is to endure forever, and all are enjoined to obey it and use their endeavours that no one is molested in the performance, of his religious ceremonies Dated 7th Jumad-ul Sani, 992 Hejirah

THE END.

OPINIONS.

ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, LONDON.

Dated 6th March, 1899.

DEAR SIR,

I am directed by the President of the Royal Historical Society, Sir N. E. Grant Duff, to return you his sincere thanks for your letter of the 19th January, and copies of your interesting work on "The Origin of Caste," copies of which have been placed in the Library of the Society.

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT HALL,

Director and Hony. Secy.

To

PROMATHA NATH MULLICK, ESQ.

 LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S CAMP, PUNJAB.
Dated 24th January, 1899.

To

PROMATHA NATH MULLICK, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

I have to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of the 19th January and your treatise on "Caste," which latter I have laid before H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor, who desires me to express to you the pleasure and interest with which he has perused it.

Yours truly,

R. G. EGERTON.

WESSIL LODGE, WIMBLEDON COMMON,

Dated 7th March, 1899.

TO

MR. PROMATHA NATH MULLICK.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for sending me your pamphlet on "Caste" and your "Annus Mirabilis." I read the latter with much interest and appreciation, for it is certainly true that 1897 was to India a year of much chastening in various ways. I am thankful to hear that the country has so far and so rapidly recovered from the effects of the famine; and that the mysterious visitation of the so-called plague does not seem inclined to spread widely, though it is still causing much loss of life in the Bombay Presidency and in the Deccan.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

C. A. ELLIOTT,

Ex.-Lieut.-Govr. of Bengal.

FROM

MAHARAJAH BAHADUR SIR JOTEENDRA

MOHON TAGORE, K.C.S.I.

TO

BABU PROMATHA NATH MULLICK.

MY DEAR PROMATHA BABU,

Before I could acquit myself of the debt of acknowledgment I owe you for your present, made

some time ago, of a copy of your "Annus Mirabilis," you send me a fresh present—a copy of your "Two Words." Through inadvertance on the part of my assistant, there has been this delay in the acknowledgment of the former; but on the principle of better late than never, I take this occasion to thank you very much for both the presents.

It is very gratifying to see that young as you are, and unlike many of your wealth and position, you have taken to literary pursuits. It would be well for our country if your example were largely followed. Your "Annus Mirabilis" was a half-hour's interesting reading to me, with its description of the calamities that befell India during the year 1897 in the shape of famine, plague, earthquake, riot and war.

Your second treatise, I am glad to see, is an attempt of a higher order, treating as it does, in dialogue form, of some of the knotty questions of the Hindu theology. The reading cannot fail to be instructive and interesting as well.

Yours sincerely,

JOTEENDRA MOHUN TAGORE.

THE PRASAD,

24th March 1899.

MY DEAR BABU PROMATHA NATH,

I am really very pleased to see that your time is so fully engaged in literary pursuits, and to find a

young man like yourself bringing out one book after another at short intervals of time. It is indeed gratifying to find one of your youthful age and one in the enjoyment of wealth and position devoting himself so zealously to literary pursuits. I shall make time to read "1898 or India's Recovery" and I am sure it will be quite as interesting as your former productions. Meanwhile I offer you my best congratulations and good wishes for your success in the literary world.

Yours affectionately,

JOTEENDRA MOHUN TAGORE.

TO

BABU PROMATHA NATH MULICK.

FROM

RAJA PEARY MOHUN MUKERJEE, C.S.I.,

OF UTTERPARA.

MY DEAR PROMATHA NATH,

How very kind of you to think of me and send me a most welcome present. The new work "Doya" has a high moral tone, is very thoughtful, and has been exceedingly well-written.

Yours very truly,

PEARY MOHUN MOOKERJEE.

UTTARPARA,

May 5th, 1901.

MY DEAR PROMATHA NATH,

Allow me to congratulate you on the excellence

of the *collection of poems a copy of which you have kindly sent me. The simple and easy flow of verse and the choice of words make the reading of the little pieces delightful.

Yours very truly,
PEARY MOHAN MOOKERJEE.

FROM

THE HON'BLE JUSTICE
CHUNDER MADHUB GHOSE.

The 11th November, 1898.

MY DEAR BABOO PROMATHA NATH,

I regret that I have delayed so long in acknowledging receipt of your kind letter of the 28th ultimo and of your book "Doya," which you have been so good as to present to me. I wanted to reply to you after I had read the book.

I have now read it, and I may say that I have done so with great interest. You have dealt with the mysterious ways in which God dispenses favour ably and in a very pleasing manner. I think your book repays perusal.

Your sincerely,
C. M. GHOSE.

FROM

MAHARAJAH BAHADUR SURJYA KANTA
ACHARJYA OF MYMENSING.

MY DEAR PROMATHA BABOO,

Very many thanks for the book "Doya," which you kindly presented to me. I have gone through it. This is really a sensible book of the sort which has yet been published, and I must say the book is well got up, the language is chaste and simple, even a child can understand it.

Yours very sincerely,
SURJYA KANTA ACHARJYA.

FROM

MAHARAJAH MANINDRA CHANDRA NUNDY
OF CASSIMBAZAR.

DEAR SIR,

I am exceedingly glad to have a copy of your latest production "Doya," and am very pleased to have gone over a few pages of it. It is indeed of great interest to see that a man of your position and calibre has devoted himself to improve our mother tongue. I heartily wish you every success in the literary field. May God bless you in the line you have adopted, and may you cut a very brilliant figure amongst the first rate writers of our land.

I remain, Yours truly,
MANINDRA CHANDRA NUNDY.

Calcutta 28th March 1898.

FROM

MAHARAJAH DURGA CHURN LAW, C.I.E.

MY DEAR PROMATHA NATH,

I have received the pamphlet you have thought proper to send me. I have read a small portion of it. The narrative of events seems quite full and comprehensive and a work which I must say does you credit. That instead of spending your time thoughtlessly and to no purpose, like many other young men, you have taken to literary pursuits is very commendable, and I wish you would continue the course you have taken.

Yours affectionately,

D. LAW.

BABU PROMATHA NATH MULLICK.

8, EUROPEAN ASYLUM LANE,*Calcutta, 2nd April, 1898.*

FROM

MR. MAHOMED YUSOOF KHAN BAHADOOR, B.L.,

MY DEAR SIR,

Let me acknowledge with thank your letter of the 22nd March along with a copy of your work of which favourable notices I had already read in the papers so that I longed to see the book itself.

I am extremely obliged to you for the work. It shows power of thought and observation which does great credit to the writer.

Yours very truly,
MAHOMED YUSOOF.

26, VARANACI GHOSE'S STREET,
Calcutta, the 4th day of April 1898.

FROM

PROTAPA CHANDRA GHOSHA, ESQ.

MY DEAR PRAMATHA NATHA,

Your "The Annus Mirabilis" to hand. A lovely resumé of the year 1897. I was delighted to observe that such noble sentiments have gladdened the heart of so young a wealthy Bengali. Of late our misfortune has been to misunderstand and misinterpret the Policy of our benign government and it gives me infinite relief for there is yet a hope for young Bengal.

I earnestly wish other young members of the wealthy families of Bengal to take a lesson from you.

May the Great Durga give you a long life !

Yours affectionately,
P. GHOSHA.

85, GREY STREET,

Calcutta, June 26th 1902.

FROM

THE HON'BLE SARADA CHARAN MITRA, MA., B.L.,

Offg. Judge, High Court.

MY DEAR BABU PROMATHA NATH,

I have now been able to go through your History of Vaisyas of Bengal and *Avukus Lahari*. I seldom relish Bengali poetry as my misfortune has been to come generally across doggerels and translations, and I am glad to say that some of your pieces evince real poetry. (রসায়কং বাক্যম্)

The features and complexion, the habits and tendencies and the intelligence of the Subarnabaniks of Bengal coupled with the name itself always led me to believe that they were of Vaisya origin. But your History has confirmed me in the belief. My impression was that in Bengal causes, which I have a desire to state fully later on, made the Kshetryas and Vaisyas adopt the practices of the Sudras (বৃষলতাং গতাঃ). The immigrants from the North-west failed to retain their caste practices. The Subarnabaniks shared the same fate. Their further degradation in the scale of sub-castes was due either to Brahminic influence or the King's wrath.

I remain,

Yours Sincerely,

SARADA CHARAN MITRA.

FROM

BABU CHANDRA NATH BOSE, M.A., B.L.,

Translator, Government of Bengal.

Babu Pramatha Nath Mullick's "History of the Vaisyas of Bengal" is a very interesting paper. It is the result of great industry and extensive study; and coming after so many other pamphlets and booklets in English and Bengali it fully establishes his claim to be regarded as an earnest and devoted literary worker. The Appendix to his History of the Vaisyas possesses a special interest as a contribution to our domestic history in the early years of British rule in Bengal.

CHANDRA NATH BOSE.

13th August, 1902.

The Indian Mirror, 13th September, 1898.—Babu Promatha Nath Mullick is one of our coming men. He is a younger son of the late Babu Jodoolall Mullick, so noted in his day for sturdy independence, as has been recorded times out of number in the municipal history of Calcutta. Babu Promatha Nath Mullick appears veritably as a chip of the old block, and he will be heard of, as he grows in years, to advantage. He has all the necessary qualifications for making a good figure in public, and he has the advantages of birth, wealth and education on his

side. What is better still, he seems to be possessed of the healthy and laudable ambition to serve the public. At a time when young men of birth and wealth in Bengal squander away their years in idleness or worthless pursuits of sensual pleasure, it is pleasant too see that at least one of them is true to his parentage, and to himself. We have had before us for some time a tiny publication—the work of Babu Promatha Nath Mullick—entitled “1897, ‘The Annus Mirabilis,’ or India’s Chastening in the Midst of Joy.” In this little *brochure* of seventeen pages, the author has taken a rapid glance at the chief events, or rather the chief disasters, that occurred in India during the fateful Diamond Jubilee year. The greatest famine of the century, the unprecedented earthquake, the plague in Western India, the cyclone and storm-wave in the Chittagong District, the floods, the riots, and the Frontier War, have all been noticed briefly but with a graphic and forcible touch. Babu Promatha Nath Mullick has meted out praise and blame with an even hand. He has pointed out to his countrymen the errors of their ways. He has exhorted the Government to be more in touch with the people. In a word, he has shown that one can be a thorough patriot, and, at the same time, evince the most practical loyalty to the Queen and her Representatives. We hope Babu Promatha Nath Mullick will persevere with his literary efforts,

and we sincerely wish the young gentleman every success in every attempt to serve his countrymen.

The Hindu Patriot, 28th March, 1898.—Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, second son of the late Babu Jodoolall Mullick, of Pathuriaghatta, has published an interesting and well written *brochure*, entitled "1897, 'The Annus Mirabilis' or India's Chastening in the Midst of Joy." We have read the pamphlet with great pleasure, and are glad to find that the author is treading in the footsteps of his departed father, who was a most prominent public man in Calcutta. Babu Promatha Nath begins his paper with the famine with which the year 1897 began, and passes on to the earthquake, the Jubilee celebrations, the Poona murders, the riots, and the other notable incidents of the year. His observations are shrewd and sensible, and his style is flowing and delightful, occasionally rising to real eloquence. He has begun well, and we trust that he will continue to devote his time to those ennobling intellectual pursuits by which his departed father had so conspicuously distinguished himself, but to which the scions of our aristocratic families are unfortunately seldom found to take kindly.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21st October, 1898.—Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, second son of our

late distinguished townsman, Babu Jodoolall Mullick, although quite a young man, has spent his time very usefully. He has written three original works, one in English and two in Bengalee, and they have been lying before us for some time. He has very appropriately dedicated the two Bengalee publications, entitled "Dootee Katha" or "A few Words," and "Doya" or "Mercy," to his father and mother respectively. This speaks volumes of the filial piety and reverence of the author, for which the Hindus are so famous. Both the books are rich in noble sentiments, clothed in simple and chaste Bengali, and every family in Bengal should have a copy of each of them for the benefit of its lady members. The English *brochure*, entitled "The Annus Mirabilis" or "India's Chastening in the Midst of Joy," contains a graphic account, in beautiful English, of the succession of dire calamities which visited India in 1897, which, being the Diamond Jubilee year of the Queen, everybody expected to enjoy most happily. Heaven has blessed the young author with talents and wealth. May he live long and utilize them for the benefit of his countrymen!

The Bengalee, 24th September, 1898.—We have received a copy of a little *brochure* by Babu Promatha Nath Mullick. The author has named his work "The Annus Mirabilis" or "India's

Chastening in the Midst of Joy." Babu Promatha Nath Mullick is a young writer of considerable promise. He is the scion of one of the wealthiest families in Calcutta, the son of a distinguished father, the late Babu Jodoolall Mullick. The public will watch with interest a career which, we trust, will be fruitful of public services. Babu Promatha Nath Mullick writes well and vigorously, and with much good sense. We have no doubt that, like his father, he will devote his leisure to literary culture and to practical efforts for the social and political amelioration of his countrymen.

The Indian Mirror, 17th November, 1898.—Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, the second son of our late worthy fellow-townsmen, Babu Jodoolall Mullick, has sent us a copy of his Bengalee treatise, entitled "Dooti Katha," or, as it may be freely translated, "A few Words." In this treatise he has dealt with some spiritual topics in the shape of a catechism between teacher and pupil. Every line of it clearly shows the trend of the writer's thought, and gives refreshing evidence of his spiritual culture. The publication is an important one, not because of the subjects it treats of, for others before him have written on them, but because it is the outcome of the pen of one who has wielded it—if scions of the Bengalee aristocracy ever wield it—in a direction

which is, generally speaking, the least congenial to their inclinations and tastes. We trust the example set by Babu Promatha Nath Mullick will be largely followed by others born, like him, with silver spoons in their mouths.

The Indian Mirror, 16th December, 1898.—Only the other day we noticed in these columns a Bengalee treatise, entitled “Dooti Katha,” written by Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, the second son of the late Babu Jodoolall Mullick. We are much pleased to find that the young gentleman has made another intellectual gift to the Bengalee reading public. The book, which we now have the pleasure of bringing to the notice of our readers, is designated “Doya” or compassion, the theme being illustrated by a sketchy story, divided into three sections, each under an appropriate heading. In the other book, the writer gave evidence of his spiritual culture. In this, his heart as well has come into play. Babu Promatha Nath Mullick has indeed, shown his brethern of the upper ten the right way to make use of their time and purse, and at the same time given the public a fitting opportunity of congratulating him on the success which has attended the exercise of his intellect, and of wishing him greater success in his future efforts.

The Indian Mirror, 26th January, 1899.—The literary activity of Promatha Nath Mullick is beyond all praise. This scion of the Calcutta aristocracy seems to have adopted literature for his amusement. But what he gives forth to the public is not in the shape of light amusement, but solid food for reflection. His last essay in the literary direction is an eminently readable treatise on the "Origin of Caste," in which he has, with the help of his researches and sound common-sense, combated the existing theory on the subject. The treatise bears the impress of patient industry and original power of thinking, and if all the conclusions he has arrived at are not concurred in by those who are in an authoritative position to pass an opinion on their soundness, they are, at any rate, worth their serious attention. We heartily commend the example of the young writer to others in the same position in society as himself, and wish him all success in the course of life he has chosen for himself.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25th March, 1899.—"1898" or "INDIA'S RECOVERY"—By Promatha Nath Mullick.—We are glad to find that Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, son of our late lamented friend, Babu Jadoolall Mullick, and younger brother of Babu Anath Nath Mullick, who was the other day honoured by Government with a Rai Bahadur-

ship for his princely donation to the Lady Dufferin Fund, has appeared again before the public as an author. His pamphlet, "Origin of Caste," was an excellent treatise. The present *brochure*, entitled "1898" or "India's Recovery," is written in vigorous and simple English, and will amply repay perusal. The author thus describes the gloom with which the year 1898 opened:—"A general stringency in the money market; the grim preparations for the second frontier war; the sudden arrests of the Natus and others; the passing of the Sedition Acts; and last, though not least, the horrible devastations of that cruel monster, pestilence, all over India, which in the previous year were only confined to one part of the country. Such dire events marked the dawn of 1898." In Lord Curzon the author finds a saviour, and he concludes thus:—"May His Excellency be fully alive to the virtuous Queen's Proclamation of 1858, may His Excellency keep intact and integrate the glorious Empire. The year opened dark and threatening; but nature favoured the land, as we at the very outset expected, and the unfortunate land witnessed a gradual recovery, and the future looks full of promise." We wish the young author a long and useful life. If the sons of our wealthy men spend their time in literary pursuits, they can not only benefit themselves, but also their countrymen, to a considerable extent.

The Indian Mirror, 15th April, 1899.—It would appear that Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, the young writer whose Bengalee works on religion and morality we have recently had the pleasure of noticing in these columns, has turned his attention to other subjects as well. The pamphlet he has lately brought out, under the title of "1898," or "Indian's Recovery," shows that the writer is an intelligent observer of passing events. In this *brochure*, he shows that the gloom, which ushered in the year 1898, dispersed at the close of it. The nomenclature of the pamphlet does not sufficiently indicate its contents; for the text represents topics that are not confined to India, but forms, as it does, a bird's-eye-view of the political situation of the world, both new and old. Independence of thought and freedom of utterance are primary requisites of one who would deal in political subjects, and the contents of the pamphlet under notice show that the writer is by no means wanting in these requisites.

The Hindoo Patriot, 17th June, 1899.—"ORIGIN OF CASTE."—By Promatha Nath Mullick.—The author, who is a scion of the wealthy Mullick family of Pathuriaghata, has already established a reputation as a promising writer of both English and Bengalee, and we can honestly say

that the booklet under review will considerably enhance his reputation as a writer of unimpeachable English. He has evidently made himself familiar with the researches of Western savants on the subject of a common origin of the human family, and his treatise gives, within a small compass, the substance of almost all that has been written on this fascinating theme. But whether the caste system can at all be regarded as an unmixed evil, and whether its extinction can be brought about by learned dissertations alone, are questions which we may well commend to the attention of the author. This is a world of compromises and not of abstract theories, and the caste system of the Hindoos is so inextricably interwoven with the fabric of Hindu Society, that it would be quixotic to attempt to tamper with it, and, what is more, we are not at all sure if any such attempt would not be of doubtful wisdom and expediency—at any rate in the present state of our society.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27th June, 1901.—
“ABAKASH LAHAREE.” We have read the “Abakash Laharee” of Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, son of the late well-known and public-spirited millionaire, Babu Jodoo Lall Mullick, with considerable pleasure. It consists of fifteen poetical pieces on diverse subjects, some of which dis-

plays genuine talent and imagination. The young author's style of writing is simple and terse, while his versification seems to be faultless. His powers of description are also of no mean order. Babu Promatha Nath is already known to the public as a literary character for his previous publications; and his present work is a further contribution to Bengali literature. Those who have a taste for Bengali poems will, we dare say, find much in his booklet to please and interest them. It is a good sign that many of our wealthy young men, instead of dissipating their energies after frivolous objects, are devoting their time to the culture of their minds and hearts.

The Statesman 26th July, 1902.—"ABAKASH LAHAREE," is the title of a collection of poetical pieces composed by Babu Promatha Nath Mullick, son of the late Babu Jodoo Lall Mullick, of Calcutta. The pieces are written on a variety of subject; and some of them are full of thought and feeling. The reader of Bengali poetry will find in them much wherewith to beguile his leisure hours.

The Indian Mirror, 20th June 1901.—We congratulate Babu Promatha Nath Mullick of this city on the versatility of his intellect. His former works were mostly of a religious and philoso-

phical character. His recent production, *Abakash Laharee*, is in the poetical line. The poetry is not, however, the poetry produced by the aid of a rhyming dictionary. Some of the pieces are instinct with feeling of more than an artificial kind. Others, too, breathe thought above the common-place. The poems, embodied in the volume, embrace a variety of topics, ranging between the gay and the grave, of which latter, those addressed to the writer's father (our late eminent townsman, Babu Jodoo Lall Mullick), and to the late Queen Victoria, are the best. The poems have been written during the writer's leisure hours, and they will undoubtedly present profitable reading to many during theirs.

